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The Hon^{ble}

Chief Justice The

Imperial Hotel



RUDEKKI,

A TALE OF THE SEVENTH CENTURY :

THE LAMENT OF HELLAS,

AND

OTHER POEMS.

There's a bliss beyond all that the minstrel has told,

When two, that are link'd in one heavenly tie,

With heart never changing and brow never cold,

Love on through all ills, and love on till they die !

One hour of a passion so sacred is worth

Whole ages of heartless and wandering bliss ;

And oh ! if there *be* an Elysium on earth,

It is this, it is this.

MOORE.

LONDON :

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THOMAS ALLBUT AND SON, HANLEY :

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To Mr. B. Linné 9/8/76

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Miss M. R. Shea



CORK:
Printed by John Hennessy,
French-church-st. press.

TO THOMAS MOORE, ESQ.

SIR,

I HAVE NOW the honour to avail myself of your very kind permission, to inscribe to you the following poems.

They are the labour of youth, and therefore not entirely exempt from the consequences of inexperience. This admission will render them less unworthy of your patronage, though it may not influence that of the public; yet, whatever be their decision, my ambition is attained in thus dedicating to you my first publication, and in subscribing myself,

SIR,

Your obliged devoted servant,

JOHN AUGUSTUS SHEA.

Совк, December 1, 1826.

TO MY LYRE.

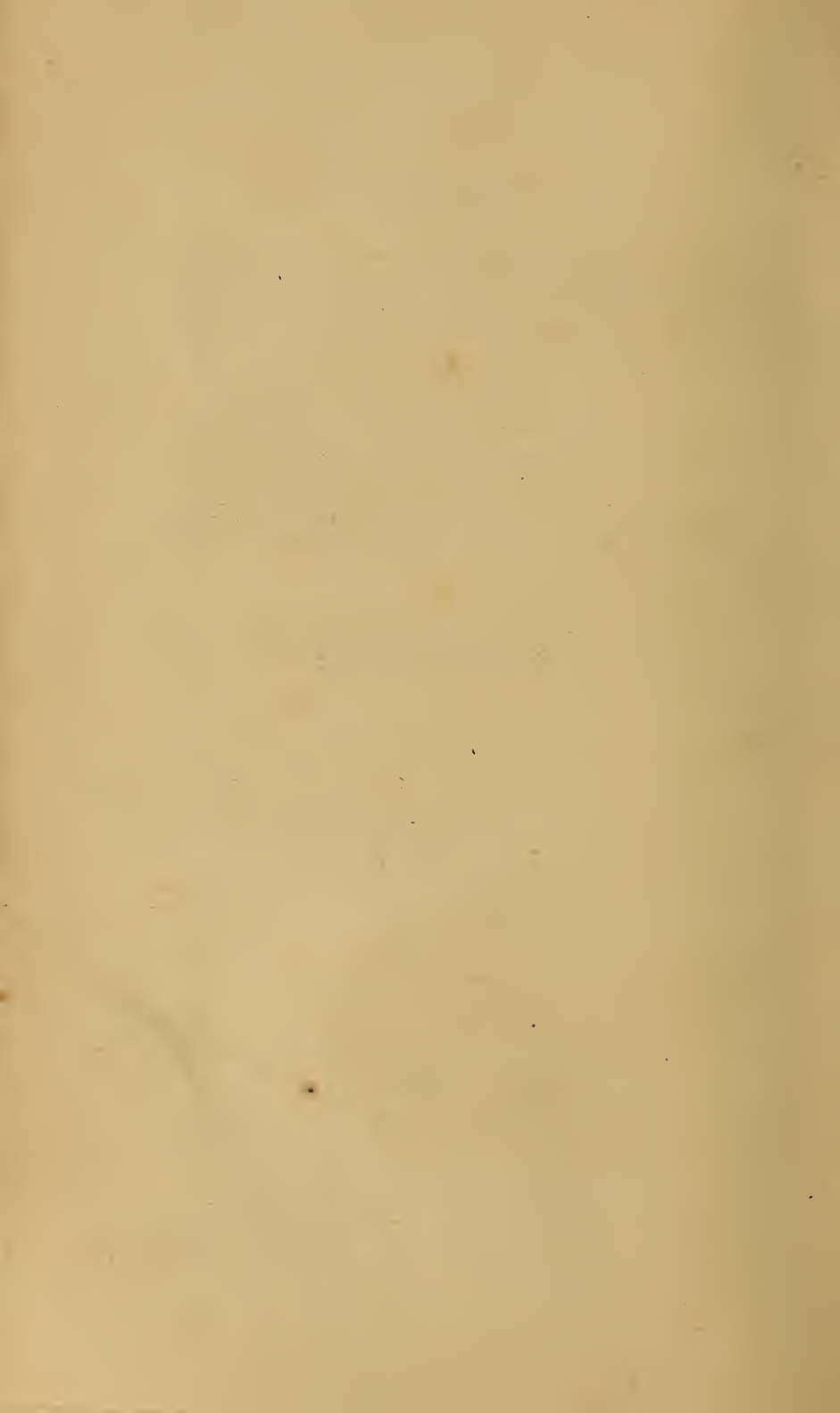
AWAKE once more my Lyre! thou who hast been
On woody upland and o'er grassy lea,
Thro' many a calm and many a stormy scene
The sharer of my feelings—and shalt be!
Thou who hast been what few have been to me,
Ne'er with a deeper feeling of delight
Did I awake thy earlier minstrelsy,
When but the wood-nymphs heard thy numbers' flight
Winging its artless way thro' the blue-starry night —

Yes, never did this hand awake thy string
With deeper rapture than it now awakes,
Tho' the wild song which thou wert wont to sing
Must be forgot, and tho' thy soul forsakes
The luxury of green groves and glassy lakes,
To woo the unsparing world's fastidious ear,
Yet need'st thou not lament thy bow'rs and brakes,
Thy distant waterfalls and currents clear,
And oft the approving voice of listening mountaineer ; —

TO MY LYRE.

For there is one, thy country's friend and thine,
But for whose patron-voice thou shouldst not go
Forth from thy haunts of rose and eglantine ;—
Who will not know thee when *he* deigns to know,
“ Good without effort—great without a foe ?”
And tho' thou'rt stranger to the force and fire
Of other chords, thou must not tremble,—no!—
Were but *his* ear to hear, whom all admire,
Great were thy minstrel's meed :—then wake once more my lyre !

R U D E K K I .



RUDEKKI.

I.

'TIS morn on the mountains — the night-clouds retire —
And the bright sun hath lifted his banner of fire,
At each step glows his eye-beam less timidly tender,
'Till the porphyry mountains are fill'd with his splendour ;
On the couch of the soldier he flashes his beams
To summon him back from the region of dreams ;
He blushing breaks on the young maiden's pillow,
But *her* soul is awake as the storm-stricken billow ;
And the bright dews are gleaming in many an eye,
Which the warmth of his brilliancy never can dry.

Away in the morning the shadows have roll'd,
The men of the Prophet his standard unfold ;

The city arises in beauty and tears
At the tramp of her troops and the flash of her spears,
And the voice of her war-trumpets brazenly breaks
Where the trembling of lips and the fever of cheeks,
And the tear-dropping lid and the cloud-cover'd brow
Are signs of the wild bosom's agony now ;
For her young ones and strong ones have muster'd their might
And the charger and sabre are girded for fight :
The column of archers is lusty and long,
The slingers and riders are many and strong,
And the light of the sun on each uplifted lance
Flashes death on the foe that would check its advance :
And the youthful and fair of the city are press'd
To the tremulous beat of the war-cover'd breast,
And the friend and the sharer of happier days,
Ere battle's voice chang'd them to glory from ease,
Presses on to behold and embrace ere they part
The light of his childhood — the friend of his heart.

II.

The banners advance, and the army appears
Passing on with their far-spreading forest of spears ;
The moan of the multitude, and the loud hum
Of the strong-hearted soldiers — the roll of the drum —
The sounding of trumpets — the trampling of steeds,
The crowding of camels from mountains and meads —
And at intervals up thro' the populace sent
From some silver-hair'd father the bursting lament —

The wild words of sorrow in moan and in shriek
From the heart of some maiden or mother that break —
The waving of banners — the vigorous bound
Of some proud Arab steed at the shrill trumpet's sound —
The people who gather to mourn or behold
That thundering host to the battle-field roll'd,
As countless — as bright — and as loud in its sweep
As the stars of the sky or the waves of the deep —
And the lattices crowded with forms that appear
Like beautiful flowers in the bloom of the year —
All send up to heaven a sound and a sight
Of gladness and sorrow — despair and delight !

III.

But who at the head of that multitude rides
As fearless and strong as the charger he guides ?
Tho' the high marble brow has no time-trace for him
His smooth cheek is pallid — his young eye is dim.
The soul-stirring shouts of that fanatic crowd,
Like the voice of the thunder-peal, lofty and loud —
And the echoing voices re-echoed again
Loud, louder and deeper from valley and glen,
No change to the cheek of that chieftain have brought,
So immur'd is his soul in the region of thought :
But he breaks that contemplative gloom with a glance
As bright as the light of the sun on his lance,
And turns to that place where a white kerchief shines

Mid that sad city's fast-fading dwellings and shrines,
And speaks, as he wheels round the deep mountain's swell,
In that lingering look, a heart-broken farewell !
The crowd has dispersed — the host has pass'd on—
And the lady who wav'd that white signal is gone.

IV.

And who is that lady — and who is that chief,
Too youthful for glory — too lovely for grief —
And what is this life, when its sorrows are flung
In darkness o'er creatures so beauteous and young—
When its current is poison'd and stain'd ere it flings
Its waters one pace from the fount whence it springs?—
Oh ! the few sparkling glimpses its surface receives
How quickly the storm of affliction destroys,
And the only *true* blessings life's pilgrimage gives
Are the fleet sunny moments our childhood enjoys !

V.

Had you met with that chieftain and maiden unblest,
In youth like two doves in the same sunny nest,
Or by the gold sunset of warm summer weather,
Round some cool shining fountain pursuing each other,
With that innocent playfulness which we remember
With bleeding regret in life's dreary december,
When each *now* unattainable pleasure appears
Like yesterday's bliss thro' the vista of years :

Or in days more mature, when the hot blood ran high,
 And the warmly ingenuous glance of *his* eye
 Drew life from *her* heavenly features, and she
 Was passionate, faithful, and youthful as he ;
 When her eye, with its soft, sleepy languishing light
 So cloudlessly blue and so mellowly bright,
 Entrancingly burn'd at each quick sunny dart
 With the answering passion that leap'd from her heart ;
 Or in their own bow'r, while he blushing hung
 In the warmth of his passion, adoring and mute,
 While to the sweet flight of her fingers *she* sung,
 O'er the love-breathing chords of the exquisite lute,
 When care touch'd more lightly her innocent breast
 Than the negligent folds of her gossamer vest,
 Oh ! who thus could have known and beheld them, nor sigh
 That twin blossoms like these were e'er destined to die ?

VI.

When the voice of the prophet first timidly rose,¹
 Scarcely crisping the calm of the people's repose,
 Of the few who abandon'd faith, friendship and home
 In the wake of that storm-circled hero to roam,
 To bask in his glory — to trumpet his fame —
 To weep in his exile — to share in his shame —
 To obey every word — to define every nod,
 And believe and proclaim it the mandate of God ;
 To fill his pure altars with carnage and tears
 And build up a faith on the ruin of theirs, —

Of the few who stood up to support and defend,
To applaud and announce — to enforce and extend
That infantine empire of error which yet
Should shadow the parent of earth ere its set,
The firmest was Khaled, whose spirit was brave
As e'er dash'd thro' the battle-field's life-purpled wave.

VII.

And Hassan, the chieftain who led on that day,
When the men of Medina were summon'd away,²
To strengthen the host whom Heraclius found
Like billows the rage of the storm hath unbound,
Was young in the ranks of the prophet, and dear
Were the truth of his heart and the strength of his spear
To Khaled, that lion in the red-field of slaughter,
As his valour and love to the soul of his daughter.

VIII.

They knew but one household, they shar'd but one board,
And each was the idol the other ador'd,
Each heart was a furnace of passion whose flame
With its innocent warmth was too pure for a name;
Deep, bright and unchanging, not like the sun's ray
That burns thro' the noon-tide and fades with the day,
Nor like the broad blaze of volcanoes that die
When a mightier lustre illumines the sky;
But a passion unchang'd in its fervor and light
By the glory of day or the darkness of night.

IX.

The father of Hassan had fall'n in the fight
Where Othud was red with the blood of his flight,^s
And Khaled to cherish the child had implor'd,
And left as his heritage nought but the sword !

X.

His childhood was nurs'd not mid luxury's sights
But mid the wild scenes of the lone mountain heights,
The forest — the fastness — the torrent — the dell
Where 'twas night ere the shadows of twilight-time fell ;
And when his young cheek's rosy tenderness grew
To a riper, a deeper, a manlier hue,
His untameable fearlessness lov'd to pursue
The flight of the deer o'er the dawn-colour'd dew,
And he look'd down on luxury's glitter with scorn
From the hills which he cross'd like the light of the morn.

XI.

When the storm to the strength of its bitterness grew,
And shut out the stars in their dwellings of blue ;
When the forest was swinging about in the blast,
And the lofty tree bent like a wind-beaten mast,
And the world-waking thunder-bolt silenc'd the shout
Of the withering tempest, and lightnings leap'd out
With their blue frequent flashes of vengeance to show
The live desolation that battled below,
Then — then did the spirit of Hassan rejoice
In the forest's wild swing and the hurricane's voice.

XII.

But tho' such were the seasons and scenes which he lov'd,
Far — far was his heart from their roughness remov'd ;
Every feeling and impulse, and passion that can
With its fervor and purity dignify man,
Lived — prompted and brightened uncloudedly warm
In the playmate of nature — the child of the storm.

XIII.

Soon the sword of his father was light in his hand,
And he went forth a chief mid the chiefs of his land ;
And his brothers in glory soon envied the name
That flash'd thro' the foe like a column of flame,
Striking down — burning onward, till legions roll'd back
Before the young conqueror's life-shedding track ;
To the foeman his name was a watchword of dread,
But to him whom he serv'd, and to those whom he led,
That name when remember'd, or spoken, could bring
Of glory and hope a perpetual spring ;
On the march—in the camp—when the black clouds had broken,
And red desolation in thunders had spoken,
And tempest and mountain called out to each other,
Then each soldier beheld in that chieftain a brother,
Who sooth'd every suffering and pointed afar,
Thro' the war-clouds, the mounting of victory's star.

XIV.

The might of the hand in the death-giving hour,
The warmth of the heart in the love-hallow'd bow'r,

May circle a brow or embellish a name
With the myrtle of love or the halo of fame,
But the garland oft withers — the glory declines
Ere time touch the brow it illumines or entwines ;
Do the waters not close o'er the galley in scorn
Which they danc'd round in flattering beauty this morn ?
But the bosom of him whose humanity lightens
The weeping one's anguish, and strengthens and brightens
The hopes of the dark-hearted, like the high sun,
Eternally lives in a light of its own.

XV.

How sweetly the voice of her sorrow is swelling
From that hall where the daughter of Khaled is dwelling,
The lovely — the lov'd and the loving, who made
A paradise brighten wherever she stray'd,
Lighting up every heart with the heaven of that grace
Which beam'd in her glances, and spoke in her face,
The beauty that shrank back from flattery's breath
As the rose from the wandering winds of the heath,
And won every heart yet could never be won
Save by her own young Arab chieftain alone,
And for him did the beat of her warm bosom rise
Like a tranquil wave ever reflecting the skies ;
If a shadow o'erclouded the light of his eye,
Her sensitive heart was bedimm'd with its dye,
When that grief-shade had gone with a summer cloud's flight,
It caught all its beauty and liv'd in its light,

XVI.

One eve when the sun had gone down on her bower
 Refresh'd and enamell'd with fountain and flower,
 She sate by the gush of its waters and told
 Her bliss to their wave as it pleasantly roll'd.
 Oh heaven ! to behold, in that love-nursing clime,
 That impassion'd young beauty at twilight's soft time,
 When the bosom's deep joy thro' her blue eye was beaming,
 And she seem'd like a form we adore in our dreaming ;
 When the voice of her passion began to arise
 Thro' the bow'r that extended its green shadow o'er her,
 And zephyrs were wooing her tresses with sighs,
 And the fall of that fountain gush'd brightly before her,
 And the blushes, her long golden locks could not hide,
 Were as bright as the roses that bloom'd by her side.

Song.

How stainless the light
 Of thy love-beaming eye,
 And how soothing the voice
 Of thy love-breathing sigh ;
 But dearer—far dearer,
 The passionate tone
 That calls me thy fairest—
 Thy dearest—thine own.

Oh ! 'tis heaven to repose
 In some bower like this,

Where the silvery waterfall's
Music of bliss,
And the blooming flow'rs gather
Their sweetness and pride,
From the fond one—the lov'd one,
That sits by our side.

And to think of the days
That have pleasantly gone,
And to pray that the future
May shine as they shone ;
This—this is delicious—
This—this is divine,
And to clasp the wild beat
Of thy bosom to mine.

XVII.

The lady of Hassan so thought and so sang,
Ere the last battle-trump of Heraclius rang ;
But each zephyr now brings, to her heart and her ear,
Some token of weakness — some whisper of fear ;
And the once boasted chief, to whom legions should yield,
Seems more fit for the bower than the red battle field.
Thus lovingly timid did Nourmah impart
To her idol the hues of her grief-shadow'd heart :
A heart that was ever the victim of fear
When the moment of parting with Hassan was near ;

And how chang'd is the tone of her feelings, the swell
Of this audible grief can too faithfully tell !

“ Bring not from Araby's odorous bowers,
Their mellow fruitage and blooming flowers,
Nor twine the luminous wreath, nor shed
The ottar-gul on the bridal bed ;
Nor be the sound of the tymbal borne
Mid eyes that weep to hearts that mourn !
Bring not from the bowers of Araby
One fragrant branch of the sandal tree,
And bear from the hall the vases that lie
Undoomed to gladden the bride-groom's eye ;
For no form is to bend o'er the golden cup's glow,
And no fair shining forehead to rival the snow
That circles it with its cold brightness below.
Speak not of bliss to the heart that lives
On the sighs it heaves, and the tears it gives ;
For Hassan has arm'd for the battle's call
And Nourmah weeps in the bridal hall ;
He's arm'd for the carnage, he's fled to the fight,
With an eye like fire and a brow like night,
When night with a robe of stormy clouds
From the eye of mortal her beauty shrouds :
But that brow tho' lofty—that eye tho' bright,
May sleep in the darkness of death to-night,
And that beautiful form and daring breast
In the crimson arms of glory rest !”

XVIII.

Such now are the thoughts and the tones that arise
From the sorrowing heart of that lady of sighs,
Whose passion appear'd in the warmth of its calm
Like the fire of the incense-tree, brightness and balm.

RUDEKKI.

CANTO SECOND.

I.

BEFORE Damascus' conquer'd people fled,
The host that sanguinary leader led,
The "Sword of God"—the Despot of the mind—
Th' unsleeping desolator of his kind—
Ere Khaled's thirst was slak'd from out the veins
Of th' homeless, hopeless, powerless Damascenes,
And Gabala in distant horror stood,⁵
To hear the crying vengeance of their blood;
There came to Khaled's camp a denizen,
Distinguished once amid his countrymen,
But whom the growing fantasy had made
To home and heav'n a reckless renegade,
He bar'd his sword and raising it on high
Lifted to tranquil heaven his stormy eye.

"When first the flashing of the Moslem blade
Chequer'd our Syrian groves' luxuriant shade,
And I beheld thy battle front expand
Amid the flowers and fountains of this land,

“ And saw thy warriors turn at close of day
In what I deemed a mockery, to pray
To the Omnipotent before whose shrine,
Appear'd accursed all other creeds than mine,
Oh ! would the bursting phrenzy of my soul
Like the sandy billows of the desert roll,
And bury in its burning strength that mass,
As they o'er fields of flowers and spices pass,
Then could I die—their shrieks of wild despair
The sweetest music to Rudekki's ear !
But lives there vassal so inanimate,
So basely void of honorable hate,
As to bend down of coward slaves the slave,
Whose shrines he shielded tho' he could not save ?
Oft did Damascus gladden as I held
My crimson sabre o'er the foes it fell'd,
And with a soul-felt exultation rose,
My victor shout above her vanquished foes ;
Yet as this solitary arm could not
Chain the Invader to some distant spot,
Whose thousands thro' the yielding nations went,
Like the red scourge of the Omnipotent,
And as I've ventured to anticipate
Rather than stay that city's rapid fate,
And give those trembling portals to thy trust,
Which would ere morn have mingled with the dust,
That her fair streets may not be chang'd to graves,
Her shrines to ruins, and her sons to slaves,

My name's become the bye-word of disgrace,
 To an infuriated populace,
 And many a coward villain's hand is rais'd
 In scorn at him, its gesture lately prais'd,
 And "Traitor — Traitor!" tires the taunting air,
 From lips that bless'd me in their daily pray'r.
 Oh! be my energy against that land,
 Which spurn'd my faith of heart and strength of hand,
 Like the mad lion's when the hunters first
 Behold him on their trembling phalanx burst!
 The steel which now I lift, O Heaven! to thee,
 Strengthen and charm with bloodier chivalry,
 Than stain'd its lustre when unsheathed in
 Thy shrieking strife ungrateful Aiznadin!⁷
 Here, before Heaven, and Khaled I divest
 Of every patriot pulse, Rudekki's breast,
 And with a sworn fidelity proclaim
 My faith in Alla and his Prophet's name!"

II.

Thus the corrupted traitor sought to hide —
 (For still a flickering spark of moral pride
 Trembled within him, like the twinkling light
 Of one pale star amid the blackening night,)
 His treach'ry from the warrior-men who bent
 Upon their brands within the Chieftain's tent
 On either side his couch in guardian rows,
 To swell his pomp and circle his repose :

But, ever and anon, the bitter smile
That seem'd to search his bosom's inmost wile,
The oft repeated glance that look'd him through,
With unconcealed conviction, and withdrew
With that disgust which ev'n the villain hath
For him who treads his own unholy path,
And which the fear, their hearts were forced to feel
Before the "Sword of God," could not conceal.
These touch'd or seem'd to touch his bosom now,
For clouds came gathering o'er the alter'd brow,
Which now in storm, and now in calm was seen,
As the fleet strife of feeling work'd within :
It pass'd — the final spark had withered down,
And he ignobly brook'd the menials' frown.
Yes! there is that in guilt which dare not rise
To flash defiance in the doubter's eyes —
That which will sometimes feel the o'erwhelming sense,
And curse of its own moral impotence,
And, tho' it writhe within the hell of pain,
Cannot look out with daring or disdain —
Which must, in silence, scorn and shame endure,
And dare not — cannot say "this soul is pure!"

III.

Uprose the Chieftain from his seated rest,
And clasp'd the rebel convert to his breast,
" Leaders and followers of Alla's war,
Behold the rise of conquest's promis'd star !

Behold the chief of whom our Prophet dream'd,
 When Heaven's prophetic inspiration beam'd⁸
 Upon his sinless slumbers, and a voice,
 Such as when its harmonious hosts rejoice,
 Round Alla's luminous throne, divinely clear,
 Thus breath'd its warning in the sleeper's ear !"

The Warning.

" Sleep — sleep, Damascus ! let thy slumber be
 Soft with thine infidel security,
 Tis but a type of that eternal one
 Which never shall be broken by a sun.
 Dream not of him whose trampling feet are red,
 With the destruction of thy countless dead,
 For brief the fall of time when thou wilt taste
 The bitter plenty of thy glory's waste,
 Thine eyes will ope, but thou wilt not awake
 From the *mind's* slumber, ere the curse o'ertake
 The reckless slaves who mid their idols lie,
 As tho' no sceptre Justice sway'd on high !
 Yet lives within thee one, whom Alla's light
 Shall lead from out the mind's unhallow'd night,
 One who shall strike thee from thy battlement,
 And fill thy shrines and dwellings with lament.
 Strong is thy God against thee — and his ire
 Flashes around thee like the thunder-fire,
 Ere the red bolt of his avenging might
 Shall hurl thee down to everlasting night !"

IV.

“ Such the immortal words—and here behold
The accomplishment of all that voice foretold !
The mighty pillar of Damascus falls,
The conqueror’s foot is mid those marble halls
Where love and beauty mingled face to face,
And the curs’d wine-cup ran its rosy race ;
Yea, the magnificent shrines where thousands came
In mockery, Alla ! of thy holy name,
And with their infidelity defil’d
The worship of the merciful—the mild —
These shall go down, and on their site shall rise
Pure temples to the Ruler of the skies,
There shall His praises meet the rising sun—
There shall they echo when the day is done !
Rise in your strength, ye faithful ! and prepare
By the first dawn of coming day, to share
The glory that awaits our arms where dwell,
The wandering people of the infidel ! ”

V.

Forth from Damascus march’d that renegade,
To slay the victims he before betray’d ;
And never reek’d his steel more direly red,
When on its sheen the Moslem blood was shed,
Than when he sheath’d it by his side again,
Hot with the blood of his own countrymen !

VI.

When the last shriek of agony had died,
And Slaughter spread her empire red and wide,
Awhile the carnage-glutted monster stood,
Gazing upon that blackening sea of blood,
As if to inhale from that horrific sight,
The fullness of demoniac delight.
God ! 'twas appalling to behold that vile,
Rebellious wretch above that ruin smile,
With his dilated eye and sabre red,
Seeking for further vengeance mid the dead,
Till from his heart one shout of triumph rang,
Then on his waiting barb he wildly sprang,
Shook the loose rein along his haughty neck,
And like a billow bounding o'er a wreck,
Dash'd on the dying, and happier still the dead,
To join the host the youthful Hassan led.

VII.

Tis morn !—that rapid charge of rosy light,
Flings back with laughing scorn the sullen night ;
The bird upspringing from his grassy nest,
Breaks into song from his refreshing rest,
The rose awakes in blushes to inhale
The fanning freshness of the ambrosial gale,
And the wild flow'rs their glittering lids uncloze
To gaze upon that glory as it grows.

VIII.

His fame had gone before him and had hung
On many a hoping heart and lauding tongue ;
And when her boundaries felt his charger's tread,
Medina in her exultation led
Her youth and beauty from their bowers and halls,
And look'd in glory from her peopled walls.
Soon did her domes of sanctity arise,
Ting'd with the blushing morn, before his eyes,
And from her portals many a chief rode out
With sound of drum, and trump, and greeting shout ;
Over their shoulders mantles loosely flung,
And brightly set with rich embroidery hung,
And the far glitter of their waving gold,
As the wind danc'd along each playful fold,
Flash'd on the eye like sunny rays that wake
O'er the blue ripples of some breezy lake.
Along their coursers' glossy sides there shone
Housings of pearl and crimson in the sun,
And, bright as summer, at each gallant bound,
Flash'd thro' the crowd a dazzling glory round ;
Then came forth Beauty, with her chosen charms
And shining ringlets, waving her white arms,
Within whose thrilling fold the Moslem's eyes
Beheld a glimpse of promis'd Paradise ;
Some scatter'd flowers along the chieftain's way,
Some sang his fame as birds salute the day,

Some glanc'd like shooting stars along his side,
Dashing the fair long curls in mirth aside
From the soft eye, that like a young sun's splendor,
Diffus'd a lustre beautiful and tender ;
And many a spear-head flash'd upon the sight,
Bath'd in the golden sunbeam's shower of light,
And banners on the fanning winds were flying,
And music in the mellow distance dying.
All throng'd to greet the renegade that came,
Crown'd with the glory of his growing fame —
Him who had been on victory's latest day,
First in the field — last — fiercest in the fray.

IX.

'Twas ere the trumpet-blast of Roman power,
Had summon'd Hassan from his Nourmah's bower,
Rudekki saw at Khaled's wealthy board,
His fruit selected and his sherbet pour'd,
And by his side, o'er plain and cliff and dell,
Pursued with falcon speed the fleet gazelle,
Launch'd the wing'd javelin, or met to frame
Some plan to check the Roman's soul of flame.
Moons wan'd, and still he dwelt beneath his dome,
Sharing alike his friendship and his home.

X.

The sun had stol'n with many a rosy ray,
The dews that gleam'd like pearls on flower and spray,

The winds that crisp'd the wave began to cease,
And gradual died into a voiceless peace,
A hotter day succeeded that cool hour,
A warmer breath pervaded grove and bow'r ;
And flow'rs beneath the ray, droop'd their bright faces,
As maidens do in love's too warm embraces.
Such was the burning hour when Nourmah went,
In lonely beauty, towards the bow'r that bent
Its cool shade o'er the silvery stream that passes
Thro' banks of breathing flow'r's and odorous grasses ;
A light verandah in its shade was plac'd,
Whose gilded shafts a clustering rose embrac'd
In its ambrosial clasp, and drooping, cast
Its blushes on the waters as they pass'd.
Along a silken ottoman the maid,
From the day's warmth, her languid beauty laid,
Her falling curls one lovely hand disclos'd,
And one upon her bosom round repos'd,
The long-fring'd lids fell languishingly slow
O'er the blue heaven of light that wan'd below,
'Till sleep — deep sleep, with a magician's might,
Wing'd her young soul for fancy's fields of light.

XI.

Scarce did her dreams of love begin to ope
On her illumin'd soul, when down the slope —
The emerald slope of her own sun-proof bower,
To shield him from the sunbeam's fiery power ;

With solitary step Rudekki came
By the refreshing flow of that cool stream,
Nor dream'd he that the music of its water
Sung by the bower of Khaled's dreaming daughter ;
Else could a stranger's pauseless step intrude
On sleeping Beauty's sacred solitude ?
O Heav'ns ! what a delightful awe came o'er
His shrinking heart thrilling into its core,
When thro' the foliage on his aching sight
Burst that bright vision like the flood of light
That fills the dazzling vista spring clouds ope,
Or like, in sadness, unexpected hope.
Stirless and mute he stood — so deep the spell,
While watching her warm bosom's gentle swell,
Her lip of ruby and the delicate hue
That o'er her cheek its blushing softness threw,
The curls descending fancifully free
O'er the white neck's voluptuous symmetry,
The silky eye-brow, 'neath her forehead's snow,
Arching the lightning that repos'd below,
And the fair arm whose jewell'd whiteness shone,
Rivalling the pure breast it sank upon.

XII.

And who *could* stand before that Beauty bright,
As before Dian's cold display of light,
Nor feel an inward warmth when wandering near
To her own pure and blessed atmosphere,

And bend before her loveliness divine,
As doth a devotee before his shrine ?
O Beauty ! how the heart still turns to thee,
Star of its hope on life's tempestuous sea ;
Meetly thour't nam'd a star — 'tis sorrow's night
That brings thee into clearer — holier light !

XIII.

Awhile he gaz'd upon her glorious charms,
Too glorious for an earthly lover's arms,
Till he felt every feeling of his soul
Into one flood of whelming passion roll,
And, kneeling by that lovely sleeper's side,
Over whose cheek a more vermillion tide
Rush'd from the heart, as if too deep a sense
Of some delicious dream had driven it thence,
Trembled with passion's excitation and
Rais'd to his burning lips her cool white hand ;
Then laid it softly to its envied rest,
To rise and fall as mov'd that tranquil breast.

XIV.

Oh ! could *his* breast, like that he gaz'd on, be
Blest with return of his idolatry,
And would the curtain'd beauty of those eyes
Awake and beam on him for evermore —
As those which light the bowers of Paradise
Dwell only on the lover they adore.¹⁰

But the calm heave of that fair bosom shows
How deep and tranquil *there* is Love's repose,
And, as the smile along her features beams,
How little doubt disturbs her golden dreams.
Yet, tho' the joy of Hassan's soul she be,
Is he not bold and beautiful as *he* —
As fair a form — a hand, a heart as brave,
As strong to crush, as merciful to save?
But friendship link'd *them* — should not friendship be
By its own worth secure from treachery?
Yet what is friendship, when a form so bright
Turns on some clouded soul her hallow'd light!
Oft had he seen her in her secret walk,
Catching with care the wood-doves' amorous talk,
And showing a form within the gladd'ning wave,
Such as the brightest Peri never gave,
When, bending o'er some fountain's glowing breast,
She furl'd her pinions into plummy rest!¹¹
He saw, and he ador'd — and burn'd to speak
The love that lit along his fever'd cheek;
But he might meet her at that holy hour
That gives to love a more subduing pow'r,
And there in that sweet walk, when all around —
The distant fountain's soft and languid sound,
The sighing streamlets and the whispering boughs,
Make to the flow'rs and winds their evening vows,
And tears along the folding blossoms start
To see the sun, their living lord depart,—

Yes, in that hour, when eloquent of love
Are star — flow'r — streamlet, all below — above,
Then will she not her bosom's treasure yield,
When Virtue's self walks forth without her shield?

XV.

Such were his thoughts — and could he part her then
Whom, parting once, he ne'er might meet again ?
Haply her innocent eyes may shortly ope
And glad his spirit with one ray of hope —
One bright redeeming ray that might recal
Some of the bliss he felt before his fall,
When his *pure* fame had found a voice among
His native hills in story and in song ;
For, when the heart dwells not in calm, what charm
Can with the same gigantic strength disarm
The demon, whose sirocco-like control
Blasts every germ of bliss within the soul,
As the resistless witchery that lies
In the absolving light of woman's eyes?

XVI.

Beside the ottoman an ivory lute
Lay like the dreamer beautiful and mute,
Whose magic voice was like that maid's when free
From slumber's spell, all love and melody ;
He rais'd the lute and cautiously retir'd
To where her beauty might be still admir'd,

Where thro' the bower's cool and clustering green
He still might see, yet be himself unseen :
“ There, when the tongue of music shall have spoken,
And the soft chain of sleep's enchantment broken,
May she not come to track that waking tone
To the sweet source from which it shall have flown ;
Then — then, can my enamour'd soul address
That maid in her awaken'd loveliness.”

XVII.

Softly at first he touch'd the lute, there came
A timid breath of music from its frame,
A stronger chord a nobler echo flung,
Of love and battle-field the minstrel sung —
One of those tales of oriental bliss,
Unfelt, unknown, in climes so cold as this.

XVIII.

Soon rose she from that slumber fresh and bright,
Beaming from her blue eyes a noon of light ;
Awhile she listen'd to the stream of song,
Now gently — now abruptly borne along ;
Now seem'd the tone but meet for Beauty's bower,
Now roll'd it forth with battle's thunder-power.
She broke at length that listening reverie
And look'd awhile around her tremblingly,
And tow'rd the marble shaft again, in vain,
Where, as she woo'd repose, her lute had lain ;

Strange ! for no other foot had e'er been known
To press that bower's velvet than her own !
But ah ! what new emotion of surprise
Mounts her fair face till eye to heart replies ?
Sees she not by the couch some footstep's print
Darken the green sod with a deeper tint ?
Fear — frenzy battles at her bosom's core,
For Nourmah's bow'r is sacred now no more !

XIX.

She fled, as flies the terror-stricken fawn,
When on her heathery sleep the foe is drawn,
And, swiftly passing down the shadowy bow'r
Like a descending star at midnight hour,
Unceasingly her arrowy flight pursued,
Nor pass'd the arbour where Rudekki stood ;
And, glad as seaman sav'd from winter foam,
Reach'd with a trembling heart her quiet home.

XX.

Soon Battle's trumpet-song rang out to call
Medina's gathering men from bow'r and hall,¹²
From the bright banquet and the brighter glow
Of eyes that make man's paradise below.
The spear was lifted and the banner spread,
The Moslem conquer'd and the Roman fled ;
The empire of Heraclius became
The Prophet's glory and the Roman's shame

O God ! how empire vanishes away,
 To prop the innovation of to-day : —
 Kingdoms like children's baubles are displac'd
 When they have ceas'd to win the growing taste,
 And unimportant oft the cause that leads
 To fall of monarchies and change of creeds :
 If, when from the concealing cave of Thor¹³
 To waste the oriental world with war,
 The Prophet and his daring follower went,
 Had the pursuers, by hostile Mecca sent,
 Into his heart one faithful jav'lin hurl'd,
 It would have chang'd the history of the world.
 Tiberias had not blush'd with slaughter now —
 Hermon ! no blood had flow'd beneath thy brow.

XXI.

Hermon emerges from the mists of night,
 To meet November's sun's embrace of light,
 Brighten the clouds before his luminous brow
 Like th' waves round Cleopatra's golden prow,¹⁴
 When o'er the Cydnus blaz'd its burnish'd sheen,
 Less dazzling than the beauty of that queen.
 Hermon awakes, as blood had never run
 Beneath his brow since first he saw that sun ;
 His springs dance down as tho' their sparkling way
 Lay pure and bloodless as it ever lay,
 And Tabor, once the glorious and the holy,¹⁵
 Lifts his broad brow into that lustre slowly,

Glad, warm and beautiful, all — all but splendid
As when the world's redeeming God ascended
Its consecrated height, while o'er it shone
The dazzling presence of that holy ONE.
But thou, Tiberias ! seem'st not half so bright¹⁶
As ere thy banks were crimson'd with that fight ;
Thy weeping borders reekingly retain
Proof of the Syrian arrow's bloody rain,
And here we still the sleeping prowess see
Of the iron Roman's charging cavalry,
In the first charge of that red onset, when
They trampled down the frantic Saracen.
In death *they* slumber with calm brotherhood,
Who living fed the rivalry of blood —
In peace they slumber where in strife they met —
The Roman with the slave of Mahomet.

XXII.

There thousands rot into the festering earth,
While fond ones weep around the hopeless hearth,
To lift one mortal from the dust, and make
His glory that which millions may not shake.
How wond'rous ! in that Prophet nought could bind
Soaring ambition's solitary mind,
Even when the hostile city of his birth¹⁷
Proclaim'd his life a plague-spot on the earth.
He stood amid them a luxuriant weed
Growing in silent vigour, till the seed,

Wafted on every wind, more thickly sprung
Thau even the shining flow'rs 'mid which 'twas flung.
Conspir'd against within his native place —
Flying in danger — exil'd in disgrace —
Cut off from friendship's soothing intercourse,
Nor word, nor glance, nor sigh revealed remorse :
He bar'd his bosom to the tempest's wrath,
And spurn'd the dangers that beset his path,
Nor weeping thought nor coward feeling stole
To check the scepter'd passion of his soul,
That passion which, o'er every other want,
Ascended flame-like, fierce — predominant,
And, up ambition's dangerous ascent,
Sought a more bright and lofty element,
Until the eagle-hearted Hashemite¹⁸
Bask'd in the splendor of its loftiest light,
And Mecca's wandering exile found a throne
Circled with men and arms as with a zone,—
A throne whose power extensively embrac'd
In its pernicious clasp the turban'd east.
There lie the thousands whom his wizard breath
Seduced from love and life to war and death :
Look on each face, and say if thou canst see
The tortured spirit's final agony —
Look down — behold ! and say if thou can'st trace
The soul's convulsion on the livid face —
The withering sense of error and of ill ?
No ! each is smoothly calm, and calmly still !

Doth not the smile of triumph there remain
Despite of dissolution's racking pain,
To tell that ere the bursting soul could fly,
It heard and felt the Houri's tender sigh,²⁰
And saw upon its dazzled vision rise
The groves and streams and bowers of Paradise
In all their shadowless splendor, and the light
Of smiling beauty to illume its flight,
And her white arms extended to receive
And clasp it to her fervid bosom's heave?
Yes, Changer of the nations ! thou wert wise,
To star thy place of souls with beauty's eyes ;
Theirs' was the power — the spell that made men bleed,
And die for thy unphilosophic creed.

XXIII.

Ye silent victims of his mind's dark strength,
When will ye burst your slumber's icy length ?
Forsakers of the desert and the hills
Which the glad voice of nature's freedom fills,
Whose cliffs, when they behold the morning ope,
Echo the shouts that chase the antelope ;
When — when shall *ye* victoriously return
To the sad dwellings where your kindred mourn,
To see your children gladden as there breaks
Returning bliss along your bronzed cheeks —
Warm in their cheerful mother's close embrace,
Kiss off the trickling gladness from her face —

And be, with sabre sheath'd and banner furl'd,
The luminary of their little world ?
Oh ! the tremendous thunder-bolt that fills,
Shall often fill the terror-stricken hills,—
A thousand tempests shall awake and pass
Over thy shuddering breast, Tiberias ! —
Oft shall the child now lisping innocence
Curse battle's desolating pestilence,—
The sleeping widow dream herself a bride,
And start, and find *no* husband by her side,
Ere ye shall burst that everlasting chain,—
Ere pulse shall stir the sleepers' hearts again !

RUDEK KI.

CANTO THIRD.

I.

MEDINA rings with exultation now,
And glory brightens each victorious brow ;
No public sorrow wails the distant dead,
Sleep they not in the gore their sabres shed ?
No vain affliction mourns them, theirs' the fate,
Nor change, nor grief, nor time can terminate —
Theirs' is the clime where Alla's chosen fill
Their bright bowls from the sacred zenjebil,²¹
Mid bowers bending with eternal fruit,
Where the sweet voice of song is never mute,
But breath'd from coral lips whose passionate duty
Welcomes the warriors to the bowers of beauty,
Where laid on silken couches they repose²²
Culling the ripe pomegranate as it grows,
And lull'd to slumber by the dreamy sound
Of waters gushing thro' the sacred ground —
From shadowy date trees the sweet song of doves —
And from green bowers the voice of Houris' loves —

Pure creatures — whose dark eyes had ne'er till now ²³
Seen passion's sun-burst light a hero's brow !

II.

Slumber'd awhile in peace the spear and sword,
Blaz'd the rich banquet on the splendid board,
In many a hall Medina's beauties met,
Bathing their coral lips in cool sherbet,
And dimming with white brows the rival snow
That with cold brightness circled it below :
Gleam'd the gilt walls thro' rose and violet
Upon whose leaves the dews were glittering yet,
And beautiful the gay devices plann'd
On marble floors by many a master hand ;
And fruits of various seasons, ripe and rare,
From many a distant clime were gathered there —
Mangos and tamarinds from the trees that play
Over the sunny waters of Cambay,
Amlas' pomegranates and the grape that showers²⁴
Its clustering wealth thro' Melah's blushing bowers :
And blaz'd the silver urns emitting thence
The odorous light of burning frankincense,
Till o'er each splendid festival arose
Such odours as the gentle south-wind blows
O'er blest Arabia's sea on summer eves,
When thro' her shores each fragrant bower receives
The sun's last kiss upon its dewy leaves.

III.

Loud was the voice of triumph — all was joy,
Which sorrow dimm'd not — tears could not destroy,
Till every face might the beholder see
Bright with the soul's suffusing jubilee :
Joy lighted every heart ; — but there was one,
Not wont such glad festivity to shun,
Who seem'd to other maids, in hall and bower,
As doth the rose to every other flower ;
Her's was that vivid blessedness which play'd
 On lip and brow and cheek where'er she went,
And in Medina's halls, of pleasure made
 The lip of admiration eloquent ;
Tho' pure their bliss as dews on Hermon's hill,
Her moon-like presence made it purer still ;
Lovely the heavens when all their stars appear,
But lovelier when their Queen of light is there.

IV.

And where is she, than whose no fairer form
Hath ever made a Moslem's bosom warm ?
Has she indeed forgot each festive night .
On which her beauty was the leading light,
When mingling with the lovely and the young,
She heard her name extoll'd by every tongue ?
Is she so heedless now of beauty's spoil,
Or has *he* not return'd from glory's toil —
Hassan ! the young, the warm in lady's bow'r,
The lion-heart in battle's grappling hour ?

V.

Alas ! the memory of the sunny hours,
When love and youth led on thro' beams and flow'rs,
Never with more fidelity than now
Beat in her heart, and burn'd along her brow,
For they who've 'scaped the Roman's gory rest
Again to friends' and lovers' hearts are press'd,
Taste the ripe fruit and quaff the joyful bowl,
And tune to love's own sounds th' harmonious soul ;
But he, who made *her* youthful spirit gay,
From home — hope — love and her — is far away !
Yes fresh the memory of the past ; for ne'er
Are faded moments more intensely dear,
Than when we find ourselves alone upon
Life's billowy waste, and those we liv'd for—gone !
Then crowd the joys, the lost endearments o'er
Our weeping hearts creating thousands more,
Which we despised, neglected or forgot,
Or which we haply deem'd existed not,
For 'till the moment of the heart's distress
We know not half the wealth of happiness.

VI.

Lonely tho' unforgotten Nourmah lay,
Weeping the time of others' mirth away,
And treading back the days whose flowery chain,
Like vanished youth, can ne'er be felt again.
Along a bank of blossoms she reclin'd,
And to dark thought her darker soul resigned,

And from the world's communion shrinks away,
As doth the sad Cephalica from day.²⁵
And as the pale moon circled into air,
Like her own beauty clouded but still fair,
She thought and wept o'er moments when it shone
Upon that bower, and met her not alone,
But full of sinless passion's cherish'd pride,
The lost—the lov'd one ever by her side.
Oh! hours of hope and happiness how fleet
And false and vain, the many joys we meet
On your delicious path; ye lead us on,
And when most blest we turn, and ye are gone!

VII.

A little stream went musically by,
She gaz'd upon its surface with a sigh,
As the moon kiss'd its face;—her's too *was* bright,
Ere the heart's eclipse came, with bliss, whose light,
Like that upon the stream she gaz'd on now,
Was but reflected from another's brow.
Suddenly thro' the rustling leaves she heard
The quick-winged flutter of a startled bird,
And turning to the light her searching eye,
Beheld a tall and gallant figure nigh,
No foliage veil'd him, and the moon upon
His wounded brow and bloody turban shone.
With timid gaze awhile she mark'd his way,
As down the path he shot like morning's ray;

Then sprung with rapid footstep to depart
 From out that bower, as from the bow the dart,
 But 'ere she press'd its marge, Rudekki's sweet
 And welcome accents check'd her flying feet !

VIII.

“ Lady ! some tidings from your lord I bear,”

“ Alla ! does Hassan live ?”

“ he lives, but”

“ where

And when does he return ? In mercy speak,
 Nor let this heart in doubt and darkness break.”

“ He lives — he loves — but lives nor loves for thee,
 Another's lip is laid where thine should be :
 Nay, wake not disbelief within thine eye,
 The words I speak are chronicled on high,
 Nor let thy lip indulge that doubting scorn,
 For true my words to truth as light to morn !

At dawn we trod the battle-field, we met,
 And spear to spear, and man to man were set,
 At noon the Acbar chas'd the foes' retreating,²⁶
 At eve no pulse in Roman heart was beating.
 On the mute field a girl of beauty lay,
 Stirless, beneath the sun's retiring ray,
 Young — beautiful — endearing, while the tear
 Of anguish made her lovelier and more dear :

Wildly her lips a lifeless Roman's press'd,
Her locks were wetted from his gory breast,
And there she lay and wept, till from above
Heav'n's bright tears mingled with her tears of love.
The wounded brave were gather'd, and the dead
Left to their sleep of glory. Night had spread
Her drapery of shadowy brightness o'er
The heaven of beauty and the field of gore ;
The camp was still — no sound was on the blast,
But of the warder's footstep as it pass'd. —
All fair and silent, as I stood to view
The broad sky and the bright moon cleaving through
The cloudy billows bristling round her way,
As ploughs the lone bark thro' the surging spray ;
I gaz'd upon its calmness, but it brought
No pleasing train of philosophic thought :
Mine eye grew weary of vacuity
And sank towards the earth unconsciously,
The red — the reeking earth where breathless lay
The mingled thousands withering into clay,
Whom I beheld the morn before that fight,
Shaking the earth with their advancing might —
And as I look'd along the field there went
A shrouded figure from the chieftain's tent :
Where steals that walking mystery at an hour
That more had needed slumber's balmy pow'r ?
No living foeman lay in ambush near,
His bloodless heart was by his broken spear,

Before me still the Roman camp was spread,
 But silent as a city of the dead ;
 Then whither sped that form, and why conceal'd ?
 His secret purpose slept not unreveal'd !
 He turn'd not — stay'd not, put pursued his way
 Onward to where the sorrowing lady lay,
 And bending o'er the beautiful and young
 As if to soothe or share the woe that wrung
 Her orphan heart ; awhile he linger'd there,
 When the moon, mid her white clouds brightly clear,
 Flash'd on a visage her revealing light,
 Too oft beheld to be forgotten quite.—
 Methought our youthful chief in slumber lay,
 For bravely toil'd his sabre thro' that fray,
 But he dream'd not that night of warrior's pride,
 'Twas Hassan linger'd by that lady's side ;
 And thou in anguish like a mateless dove,
 Loving the false one who had ceas'd to love !”

“ To leave” said she, “ is not to scorn, nor yet
 To soothe another's sorrow to forget ;
 I had not known my Hassan, could I hear
 To thy smooth tale with unsuspecting ear ;
 The heart that in a fellow-creature's aid
 Can weep and bleed and break, alone is made
 For Nourmah's adoration !”

“ True,” replied
 The wily sophist, such, when unallied

With the dark mastery of that grosser thought
Which scorns the deed with noble feelings fraught,
Alone should be the chosen of that love
Whose birth-flame warms the spirit-land above :
But hear ! and if thou deem'st thy Hassan true,
To Nourmah's love, my heart's sole hope, adieu !

“ Brief by that weeping lady was his rest,
He rais'd — he clasp'd her to his steel-bound breast,
And as I gazing stood, I scarce knew whether
To praise or blame, so bright they look'd together :
He like a wooing woodbine gently twining
Round that young blushing rose, and she declining,
Shedding her bosom's dew-drops fast and clear,
Upon the parent flower that slumber'd there ;
For 'twas her grey-hair'd father who was taking
The gory slumber that can know no waking.

“ Backward the veil that o'er her features hung
To kiss away her gushing grief he flung,
And to the silent heaven of stars display'd
Beauty, before whose light their's seem'd to fade.
He wav'd a signal kerchief o'er his head —
Thro' the still camp three harness'd chargers fled,
Led by a vassal, with that silent speed
Which wings a zephyr o'er a harvest mead.
The chief is on his barb, and side by side
He and his lovely Roman orphan ride :

Follows their vassal satellite behind,
Away — away, cleaving the wingless wind :
The out-guards met him by the morning's rise
Still flying as love-treason ever flies.
Nor is it wond'rous, that a heart so young
Should cling to ought than that to which it clung,
No beauty blaz'd around him but thine own,
By that enchain'd — by thee belov'd alone.
Yes ! while in Beauty's proving flame untried,
And moving like thy shadow by thy side,
No change he felt : — but once away from thee,
Fled as youth ever does to novelty.
But he whom thou behold'st before thee now
Has met and gaz'd on many a lovely brow,
In Shiraz' halls and Georgia's mellow bow'rs,
Laughingly beautiful like summer flow'rs,
Such as they seem thro' Cashmere's purple mist,
Ere yet their opening leaves the sun has kiss'd ;
Still woman's deep enchantment never stole
The undivided worship of that soul,
Which now in burning adoration glows
Before thine eye of light and cheek of rose —
Until the glory of thy beauty's beams
Warm'd o'er my path-way and illum'd my dreams.
Oh ! what were earth, its glory and its pride,
Could I but wander at thy seraph-side,
In some lone grove, where sky and flower would be
Like our own love, all balm and brilliancy !”

“ Give me some clime,” said Nourmah, “ where alone,
I may expire unwept — unnam’d — unknown.
Give me the tempest’s shriek — the ocean’s roar —
The white surge thundering on the shaking shore—
The lightning with its livid face of light
Flashing its wrath across my aching sight —
The thunders rocking the affrighted world,
And I upon the loftiest billow hurl’d —
All which ’twould try the sternest heart to brave —
The mingled war of earth and sky and wave —
That I might dare their rage, ere I believe
That Hassan’s heart could Nourmah’s love deceive !”

IX.

She rose a mournful but majestic form,
While o’er her features swept her spirit’s storm,
Love — anguish — pride — distrust — disdain — resent,
With a successive fleetness came and went ;
She paused a moment more, then, darting by,
Flash’d from an eye of scorn her last reply.
Lessen’d her swelling drapery on the breeze,
As fades the dim sail on the distant seas,
Caught for a moment the red sunset light,
Then faded in the forest’s gloom. Twas night,
A clear — calm — starry night, and o’er the round
Of the mute azure heaven no vapour frown’d,
The moon career’d in glittering splendor by —
The star-enthron’d Sultana of the sky ;

And all was brightness and serenity,
Such as young beauty's reign should ever be ;
It was a night of calmness, but it brought
None to the troubled ocean of wild thought,
Which onward still with unsubiding roll
Heav'd its huge billows thro' Rudekki's soul.

X.

“ My dream of treachery's vanished — all's revealed —
Curs'd be the fortunes of that conquer'd field ;
Why did I not expire as I beheld
My fated hireling by the foeman fell'd,
When I had hop'd the purchas'd villain's dart
Mutely and coldly slept in Hassan's heart ;
Or had my lance but cleav'd that hireling's breast,
My purpose then had shar'd its wordless rest !
But all's revealed ! and from the farthest tent
Issues the thunder of the host's resent.
What tho' no breath of freedom Hassan gives,
Must I endure this damning thought — he lives,
Lives in the castled Roman's grasp, a chief —
Heavens ! were he less this heart's despair were brief,
Brief as the Roman's mercy, but tis vain,
The Captor will unbind his captive's chain,
To woo the mercy of the Saracen
And he *will* live to love and lead again !
Farewell each bright tho' transitory dream
That fir'd my soul with its delusive beam !

And thou my country — but, alas ! too late
The Rebel mourns thy people's bloody fate !

“ And ye — the tender, bright but blighted flowers,
That breath'd in living beauty thro' our bowers,
Do I not hear *your* supplicating cries,
For vengeance on the vulture-traitor rise
To that acceding God, whose curse even now
Throbs in my brain and burns along my brow ?
Oh ! could I lift this heart to Thee once more
With the same feelings which it felt before,
Ruler of empires ! could I once again
Drink from the fount of life, the hope of men —
That hope which wings the mounting soul to Thee —
But why aspire ? — no hope exists for me !
My friendless soul ! how different were the bright
Visions that made of thee their satellite,
When like the Nubian mirage they appear'd ²⁷
Reflecting all that wizard fancy rear'd,
But ah ! no cooling waters, woo the taste,
All is a barren, burning, boundless waste !

“ Curs'd be the soul ambition could impel
Against its noblest nature to rebel ;
Within some hoary parent's wintry heart,
When he had hop'd from weary life to part
Blessing and blest, to kindle up a hell
Which but the strength of death could quench or quell. —

To leave the weeping one of other days,
Whose blushing cheeks oft lighted at her praise,
Whose heart was weakly warm, whose eye flashed out
The pure — confiding soul undimm'd by doubt —
To leave and to deceive *her* in the hour,
When most she needed love's protecting power —
And, worst of crimes, to lift the traitor's hand
In rebel strife against his native land !
Oh my lost land ! whene'er I think on thee,
Thou parent of the glorious and the free,
When I behold thy martyrs' crying graves —
Thy altars worshipless — thy children slaves —
And *I* the desolating fiend alone,
Who've wrought thy fall — thy people's and mine own,
I envy those the dreamless sleep they take,
Which envy — glory — love can never wake,
Oh ! it were mercy then the holiest — purest —
To quench the life which thou, my soul ! endurest,
To sweep me downward from the face of men,
And hide me in my parent earth again !”

XI.

Was all he felt and suffer'd but a dream ?
Where was that lady — where the bower — the stream ?
The eye her clustering ringlets could not hide,
In grief so calm — in scorn so dignified —
Her voice of music fit for angels' song —
And her luxuriant lashes bright and long.

The purple hyacinth — the violet blue —
The sweet and silver jasmine peeping thro'
The young acacias, and the balmy breeze
Playing amid the whispering plantane trees —
Now stealing with its lip of wantonness
Beneath that lady's bosom-veiling dress,
And sleeping now upon that smooth — soft pillow,
That shone and swell'd as doth a sun-kissed billow?
No ! twas not fancy — nothing of a dream ;
Too much he felt of Beauty's burning beam ;
For Beauty often with a sunstroke's might
Withers to death the hearts that woo it's light,
And tow'rds that river's nighted margin he
In his mind's gloom had wandered heedlessly.

XII.

He liv'd but not amid the martial blaze
Of warrior-pomp or woman's brighter gaze,
The lonely valley and the forest dim,
Were not too lonely nor too dark for him,
And 'mid their depths he hid his guilty face,
Where ev'n his footstep man may vainly trace.
Like the damn'd souls of Eblis' halls, within²⁸
His burning heart he bore the hell of sin,
That, to which hope — the holiest gift of heav'n,
To man below, is never — never given ;
And in those shades, when weeping years had flown,
He droop'd — he died, abandon'd and alone.

XIII.

For many a burning day and dreary night,
Thro' valley's moisture and o'er mountain's height,
Nourmah had toil'd in unsuccessful quest
Of him without whom could she hope for rest?
She sought, but found him not, and by a tower,
The last hold of the Roman's waning power,
When from the weeping sky the twilight pass'd
And night came frowning onward dark and fast,
She sate and wept, and sang some plaintive air,
The language of companionless despair,
But knew not that within its wardered wall
Suffer'd the one for whom she suffered all;
Nor did he hear the voice he long'd to hear,
Nor knew his lovely idol sighed so near —
No! — at her bosom's wail no bosom stirr'd,
It rose — it died — unheeded or unheard.

XIV.

Nourmah return'd — so doth the soulless wreck,
No hope, no gladness, crowding on her deck,
But shatter'd and deserted. — Yes! she came
In form and feature chang'd, in love the same,
On her blanch'd cheek accumulated woes
Had shower'd unsparingly their withering snows,
Yet still she look'd majestically grand
As marble statue from a master hand.

XV.

Moons roll'd away, and yet *he* came not there —
The one whose name was in her every pray'r,
But of his love no doubt inhabited
Her breast, she wept and she believed him dead,
Tho' for his corpse they search'd the battle-plain,
And found it not amid its piles of slain.

XVI.

She sate, as she of late was wont to sit,
Unseen, but by her vassal favorite. —
Twas evening — that dear time to all who feel
The throb — the pang which words may not reveal,
And thro' the casement came the crimson light
That tracks on summer eves the glorious flight
Of the descending sun ; her stormy breast
Thought of the last bright hope it had possess'd,
When with a soft and mellow cadence came
A song of magic on the sleepless dream,
From which her mute and melancholy mind
No pleasure sought — no interval could find :
It was a song which in departed days
She oft had sung to hear her Hassan's praise,
And now so deep it rang thro' heart and ear,
That she would hear it more distinctly near.

XVII.

Low bow'd the minstrel as he slowly came
Into the presence of that gentle dame ;

And stood before her motionless and mute,
His fingers bent o'er the obedient lute,
Waiting *her* will, whose soul appear'd the while
To have wandered far away.

A sudden smile
Brighten'd her features with a pensive grace,
Like moonlight on a marble beauty's face,
She rais'd her head and bade the minstrel sing
Some tale whose tones would touch a kindred string
Within a desert-bosom, — "for," she said,
"I've hop'd and lov'd — but hope and love are dead,
"And he" —

No more her lip of woe could speak,
And the heart's purple tide roll'd thro' her cheek.
She wav'd her hand in token of her will, —
'Twas mute as voiceless midnight on a hill.
The minstrel spoke not but compliance bow'd,
Swept the awaken'd strings with finger loud,
Then sudden breath'd a gentler tone and thus
Commenc'd with voice divinely tremulous.

"Few are the summers which have shed
Their sunshine on the minstrel's head,
And few to him the hist'ries told
Of lady bright or warrior bold;
Yet I remember 'one" and here
The Minstrel paus'd, as if to waken
Some narrative that slept forsaken.

Sprung the heart's sun-flash to his eye,
Let his bronz'd face and forehead high,
Till forehead, cheek and eye became
Suffused with that ascending flame,
As ocean's morning dreams receive
The golden sunrise wave by wave
Till to it's farthest boundary bright
The whole broad surface rolls in light.

He stood before the mourning maid,
To the soft lute his fingers laid,
Along the strings in prelude ran
And thus his narrative began.

The Minstrel's Tale.

Slow breaks the morn along the hills,
Gilding with joy their laughing rills,
Music and light and beauty wake
In gurgling stream and flowery brake !
Tis morn ! the brightest and the last
Of Heaven's starry ray is pass'd —
Those meek-eyed satellites that wait
Round sable empire's throne of state.
No lingering clouds of night remain,
Like desperate hearts on vanquish'd plain,
Waiting, amid their brethren slain,
The charge they scorn to shun ;

But emerald clear and chrysolite,
And ruby chaste and sapphire bright,
In lengthening lines of varying light
Brighten before that sun.

The sky was clear, the morn was calm,
The zephyrs wav'd their wings of balm,
The song-bird trill'd his mounting psalm,
And dews still gemm'd the spray ;
The stream that by Ebnamar ran,
Mirror'd the moving caravan,
Which towar'd thy splendor, Ispahan !
Pursued its wealthy way.

Three hundred lances bold arrayed,
Glitter'd around that cavalcade,
With Arab fierce and barb of speed,
And ponderous mace and winged reed,
To check the plunder-seeking horde,
Who never sheathe a bloodless sword,
Children of desert freedom — strong
As the wild cliffs they dwell among.
Soon in the distance rough and black,
The mountains of their desert track
Bar'd to the trembling traveller's sight,
Their haunts of fear and brows of might ;
The guides that in the distance led,
Rein'd in their steeds and backward sped,
To make, if needed, their defence
More simultaneously dense,

For 'neath that sky of cloudy gold,
No wealthier caravan e'er roll'd,
Than that whose various host now lay
Around a fountain's silv'ry play,
The only one whose waters pac'd
The entrance of the sandy waste.

They gather'd from the date tree nigh,
They drew the fountain's cool supply,
And breath'd awhile the healthy air
That coolly fann'd their morning fare.

They rose, a far extending band,
Of various hue and various land ; —
The Russian from his clime of ice,
The Indian from his bow'rs of spice,
The Georgian with his captive girls,
The Persian from his lake of pearls,
The Arab on his steed of pride,
From desert-tent and mountain side,
With ready bow and rapid spear
And dauntless heart that laugh'd at far ; —
All mov'd, and long, like sparkling star,
Glanc'd axe and spear and scimitar,
Till faded in the mists afar,
That moving mass of wealth and war.
They enter'd on their track of toil,
More barren grew the burning soil,

Blacker the cliffs of terror frown'd
That stood like rocky giants round ;
Fiercer the zenith sunbeams play'd,
No spring to cool, no bower to shade ;
Death — death alone was reigning there
Mid skies of flame and hills of fear.

Sadly they toil'd, and slowly pass'd,
The heart was weak, the desert vast ;
At length the hand of Alla led
To where a tract of verdure spread,
Beneath the emerald canopy
Of many a cool and clustering tree.
The burning depth of sands they tried,²⁹
But that its liquid wealth denied ;
And down the weary camel lay,
To rest him from the mid-heav'n ray,
And up arose each snowy tent,
And forth again the searchers went,
From out the unwilling earth to wrest
The wave that cool'd its burning breast.

An Arab who for Alla bled,
And heard that trump of battle blowing,
Before whose blast the Roman fled,
Was from the Prophet's city going³⁰
Into the distant East, and he
Travell'd, and toil'd, and pray'd with me.

We sate beneath the leafy shade,
Forth from his belt he drew his blade,
“ This blade,” said he, “ has check’d the might
Of Islam’s foe and stain’d his flight,
When thro’ the field of Yermouk rung.”—

“ Was he cried Nourmah, fair and young,
Fair as the morn-star’s purest ray,
And youthful as the opening day—
Was there around his shoulder bold,
 A scarf of rich embroidery tied,
That hung in many a silky fold,
 Along his sculptur’d side,—
And did his cheek all pale appear —
And thro’ his eye-beam shone a tear
By memory forc’d from the heart’s core
Of one who never wept before ?
For he lov’d well, and on him I
Could ever gaze, and gazing die !”

“ He was not fair — he was not young,
Battle and years their blight had flung
O’er a face that might in days gone by,
Have won the gaze of lady’s eye ;
No scarf display’d its waving pride
Along that warrior’s iron side ;
And he was in that time when start
Few tears from out the freezing heart !”

Her head was bent — her lip was mute,
His finger touch'd the obedient lute —
She wav'd her marble hand, and he
Resum'd his minstrel melody.

How burn'd our lines of mountain strength
To hear the trumpet blow,
And pour their thousands' turban'd length
Upon the ready foe.

It rang at last thro' cliff and glen,
Then shower'd the shafts and met the men,
And sprang to heaven the "Tecbir" loud,³¹
Like bursting of a thunder-cloud ;
Wither'd the young and shrank the proud
Before the onset's swell ;

The surge of battle rose and sank,
The earth reel'd with the blood it drank,
And rank supplied the place of rank,
As Khaled's people fell.

Then did the mingled tumult rise
Of sabre's crash and torment's cries,
Then, thro' the shock of battle strife,
Burst on the ear wild shrieks for life,
While o'er the dead and dying pass'd
With gathering strength the living blast.
Fresh columns dash'd in strife together,
Like mountain floods in wint'ry weather,

And onward roar'd the rolling tide
Spreading its pow'r on every side,
Till th' broad field look'd a bloody ocean,
And shook as with an earthquake's motion.
There was no hope — no mercy there,
No refuge from that field of fear ;

“ To conquer or to die ! ”

From the wild hearts of friends and foes,
Shaking the rugged mountains rose

With an electric cry.

On dash'd the Roman's steel of pow'r,
Dark fell the Arab's arrowy shower,
Beneath whose cloud the purple flood

Look'd like a forest tide

Which thro' the leafy boughs, like blood,

The crimson sun-set dyed ;

And red the rush of axe and spear

As the wild combat clos'd more near,

And thro' the war-dust's rise,

Might you behold, quick, fierce and far,

The flash of spear and scimitar,

Like stars thro' hazy skies.

Then onward came a shout of dread, —

Onward a deep cloud swept and spread ;

And as the circling shadow clear'd,

Thousands of mounted men appear'd, —

Men from the Tiber's banks; whose sires
Burn'd with a flame that still aspires

To conquest — but the deed is done —
Fall'n is their pride, and set their sun !
Now roll'd the thundering charge along,
Of steel and steed and rider strong,
Trembled and sank before that charge
The Prophet legions' serried marge
Dash'd backward to their bloody pillow,
As sands are dash'd before the billow :
Down went the turban'd phalanx wide —
Down went the yellow banner's pride —³²
Till growing flight, and gasping fear
Convulsed, confused the broken rear ;
But as the Roman's conquering might
Redly pursued that scatter'd flight,
The Arab Amazons that stood
To cheer them to that feast of blood,
Beheld, unshrinkingly, the tide
Of battle refluent roll'd, and cried,
“ Bring ye — ye slaves ! eternal shame
Upon your own — your prophet's name —
Bring ye the foeman's thirsty brand
To drink the life-blood of your land —
Bring ye the faithless Roman now
To cloud the glory on your brow —
To desolate your shrines and plains —
To drag your children into chains —
And worse, to yell the song of slaves
In triumph o'er your fathers' graves ?”

O ! ne'er since nature's earliest hour,
Did woman's all-compelling pow'r
A greater triumph know,
That at that time, and on that plain,
When o'er the tepid hills of slain,
The Islam warriors turn'd again,
On the terror-stricken-foe.
They felt — stood — rallied — charg'd the foes,
Till far the withering "Acbar" rose;
Back roll'd they from the impetuous shock,
As broken billows from the rock,
And wildly rang the mingled cries,
Of men in their last agonies.
On — on the shouting Moslem dash'd,
Deadly the sabre's lightning flash'd,
Vainly the Roman war-steeds rush'd,
Their charge was check'd — their might was crush'd,
'Their thousand riders' war-cry hush'd
In death's eternal sleep !
Up in the sun-beam floated then
The yellow banner's folds again,
Then — then the Prophet's conquering men,
From shouting cliff to answering glen
Rung "Victory," wild and deep !

And there was one, amid the many,
Whose sabre-flash was bright as any ;

But o'er whose eye-beam's warlike gladness,
At moments pass'd a cloud of sadness :
When plunging thro' the battle's heat,
Some soldier weltering at his feet,
Cried, " Chieftain shield thee from the blade
Of the Damascan renegade,
One hireling's heart will soon be cold
But others may be won with gold."

Beside him long I fought and stood,
Long his red path of death pursued,
Till where the strife was wildest shrieking,
Into the foeman's centre breaking,
He fell, where foot may not pursue —
A chief the exulting Romans knew,
And bore him to their tower, a prize,
To feast the unbeliever's eyes.

He mourn'd and sigh'd, for there was *one*,
And she was far away,
With whose gay childhood his had grown,
In bliss, than which from Alla's throne,
None purer, holier ever shone
To light a mortal's way.

He thought not on the gloom around,
He heeded not the chains that bound
His limbs to that damp floor ;
The only gloom and pain he felt

Were those that deeply, keenly dwelt
 Within his bosom's core :
He only felt the living pain
Her absence wak'd in breast and brain.
What boots it now *her* search to trace,
Which found nor hope nor resting place ;
Onward she wander'd like some dove
Of sadness, whom the robber's snare
Plunder'd of her companion-love,
And left to roam the fields of air,
And break her heart in fruitless rage,
While *his* bleeds in some prison cage.

Returning to her lonely rest,
Alas ! less lonely than her breast,
She deeply mourn'd her widow'd lot,
And wept and wonder'd he came not
To share her mystery of thought.

She heard, when battle's stormy blast
Had into victory's calmness pass'd,
That he had wander'd far away,
 By other beauty won ;
And tho' around her dazzling way,
Full many a brilliant suitor lay,
 Like planets round the sun,
Their love she loath'd — their wealth she spurn'd,
And quenchlessly her bosom burn'd
 For that still worshipp'd *one*.

Her heart *could* not deem harshly now,
Of him whose almost infant brow
Blaz'd with a noon of joy whene'er
His more than sister-love was near.

Upcame at length the Moslem power,
Storm-like against that trembling tower ;
Crowded and wild was their advance,
As of waves thro' the shoreless sea's expanse.
The few who arm'd its walls look'd out —
Beheld the Prophet's banner flout —
And heard the loud advancing shout
That rent the ringing air,

“ What have we?” cried they, “ what have *we*,
To breast that host's immensity,

But weakness and despair ?

The gallant hearts that would have stood,
And dyed these walls with hostile blood,

They sleep around the land ;

And shall *our* hearts outlive the fall
Of fame — name — freedom — glory — all

That once was great and grand ?

Shall *we*, the remnant of that pow'r

That fill'd the world with conquest's cry,
Shall *we* in life's most sacred hour

In Saracenic fetters lie ?

No — Romans, no ! there still remains
The blood of heroes in our veins,

And we yet hold the ready brands
That fought for freedom in our hands :—
And of Rome's empire of the east,
These battlements are ours, at least.
Here let us fall, and as we die,
 We'll look upon these tow'rs,
And, with our hearts' last pulses, cry
 “ These, even in death, are ours !”

Each stripp'd his sabre from his sheath,
Each nobly vow'd he ne'er would breathe
In Moslem chains, but bravely die,
Rather than hear their triumph-cry.

They mann'd the battlement and spurn'd
The thundering war against them turn'd,
Nor few nor vain the shafts that fell,
They set them fast and wing'd them well ;
But 'gainst a host what can a few,
Ev'n brave and desperate spirits do ?
They bled, — they perish'd, all but one,
And he yet battled bravely on ;
He fix'd his eye and bent his bow
And shot a shaft amid the foe ;
Another and another sped, —
Another and another bled,
'Till 'mid the foremost rank had lain
Such number as our shafts had slain

Of those who stood in chainless pride
Upon that rampart by his side.
Then flung he down his shafts and bow
Among the multitude below ;
To his red brow his hand he press'd,
Then tore the garment from his breast,
“ Here waits, to slake your final shaft,
Rome's poorest, last but willing draught,
Strike here, and feel a Roman's pride !”
But not an arrow sought its tide :
He waited till the Islam-strength
Had burst the portal bars at length,
Then o'er his brand he bent his brow,
Started and cried “ my vow — my vow !”
And with a scornful gladness press'd
The steel into his gushing breast :
He battled bravely — perish'd well —
A hero fought — a hero fell !

They freed that chieftain from his chain,
Whom they had deem'd mid Yermouk's slain ;
And loud to Alla were their thanks,
Who now restor'd him to their ranks.

She who ador'd that loving chief
Was sitting in her silent grief,
When to her hall a minstrel came
And sung to her of some bright dame,

So sad, so desolate and lone,
That every feeling seem'd her own.

XVIII.

Nourmah look'd up with pensive grace
Into the minstrel's changeless face,
Lit her high forehead suddenly,

“ And liv'd there one so lorn ? ” — said she —
“ And did there ever, ever beat
Two hearts so fondly fit to meet,
And round each other greenly twine,
As my young Hassan's heart and mine ?
Oh Alla ! Alla ! didst thou wither,
Yet leave our hearts to die together,
Then would they smile at death and be
Like twin-born roses on one tree,
In the wild blast of wintry weather !
But Oh ! how darkly born am I,
Alone to droop — alone to die ! ”

XIX.

Her head bent o'er her bosom-pillow,
That swell'd and sank like summer billow
From which the rough wind cannot wrest
The brightness that illumines it's breast ;
And tears upon her drapery's fold
Shone in the sun like dews of gold.

XX.

It was too much for him to bear,
While he could check one bitter tear,
Or charm away one shadowy trace
Of woe from Beauty's angel face :
Aside his cloak he quickly flung,
And tow'rd the sorrowing lady sprung,
" Look up, my Nourmah ! look and see,
Hassan restor'd to thee — to thee !
Yes, look my life, that I may gaze
Once more upon those heavenly rays
That, even with their light of sadness,
 Lead back this heart to distant hours,
When on its hopes they smil'd with gladness,
 Like summer suns on infant flow'rs !"

XXI.

Twere vain to tell the rapturous shriek
With which her bosom seem'd to break,
The blush that fir'd her faded cheek,
 The life that lit her eye ;
Those hearts alone, who after years
Of separation — sighs and tears,
 And pangs that will not die, —
When either deem'd the other's life
Too tender to outlive the strife
Of those strong feelings which the thought
Of the heart's hopelessness had wrought ; —

Yes, they alone, who thus and then,
 Are, each to each, restor'd again,
 Can feel th' unutterable bliss
 Of such a magic time as this ;
 The o'erjoyous bosom wildly weak —
 The thrilling touch of lip to cheek —
 The beaming eyes that mutely speak
 Of hearts that almost pray'd to break —
 The face all pale with past alarms —
 The clinging clasp of circling arms —
 The melting gaze — the magic kiss —
 The looks of love that did not mourn,
 But seem'd to draw their holiest bliss
 From all the pangs the heart had borne ; —
 They — *only* they can fancy how
 Lips, cheeks and eyebeams mingled now !



XXII.

The cup of joy is flowing,
 A hundred lamps are bright,
 And Beauty's cheeks are glowing
 Like roses in moonlight :

The brightest flow'rs are wreathing
The pillars of that place,
And the richest perfumes breathing
From many a silver vase.

And eyes of angel brightness
Are beaming magic there,
And necks of snowy whiteness
Flash thro' the flowing hair,
Thro' which the pearls are glancing
Upon the dazzled sight,
Like broken sunbeams dancing
On a wood-wave's breezy flight.

And lips are there, 'twere heav'n,
To revel on awhile,
And gaze from morn till even
Upon their coral smile,
And bosoms warmly swelling,
Thro' thin veils dimly seen,
At every white heave telling
The joy that dwells within.

But is there mid the many,
In sceptered beauty now.
Who sit and govern, any
With brighter — lovelier brow,

Than she who, long forsaken
 To silence and despair,
 Her queenly place hath taken
 Amid her city's fair.

* * * *

And by the light that beameth
 In *his* eye, we know full well
 How lightly Hassan deemeth
 Of chain and prison cell :
 To gaze upon each fair one
 Within his bridal hall,
 And still behold his dear one,
 The loveliest of all. —

And to find each hour revealing
 That their existed none,
 Who kept their youthful feeling
 So pure as she had done :
This, sure is love's perfection,
 O'er which the gloomy wing
 Of stormy recollection
 Its shadow cannot fling !

XXIII.

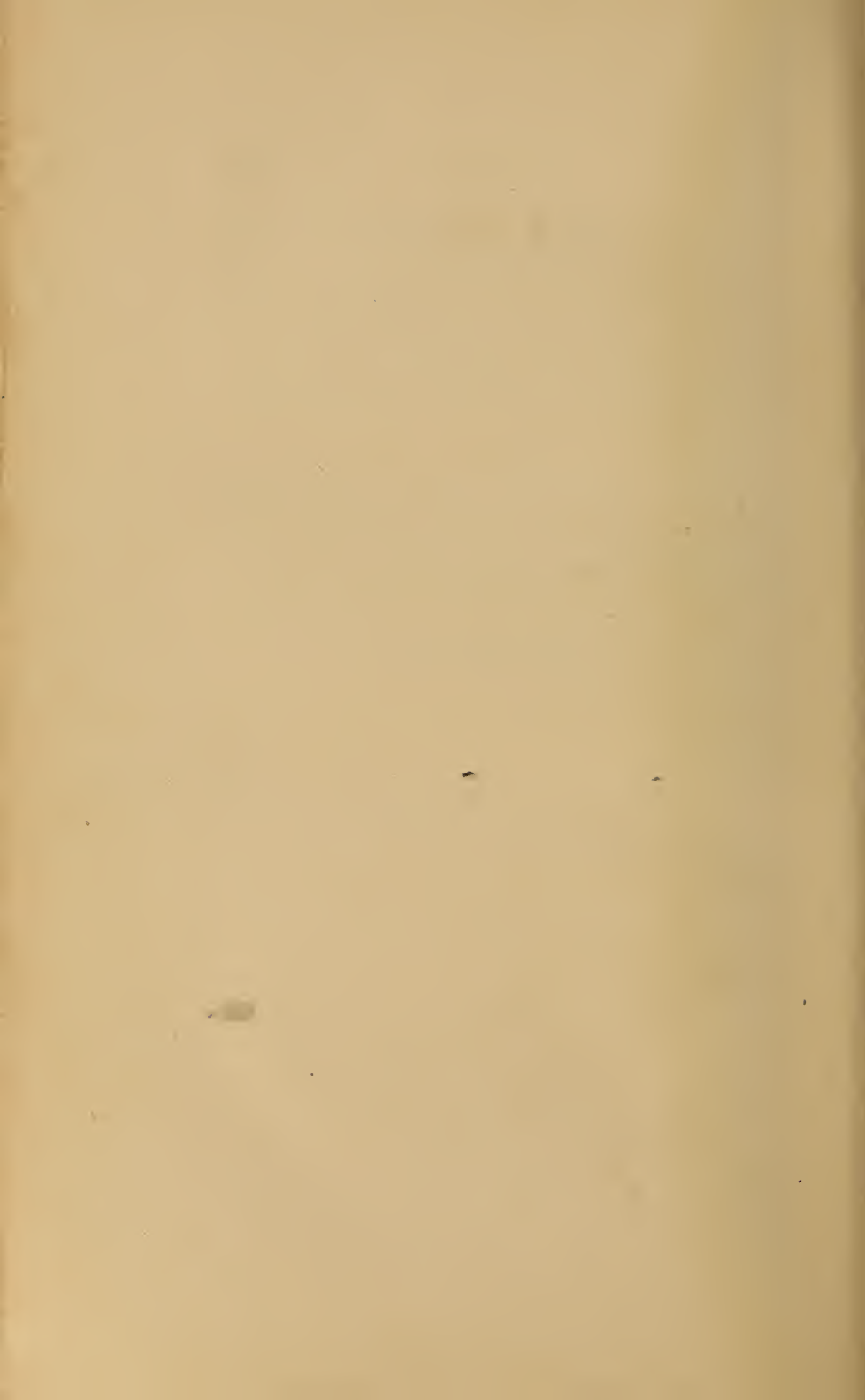
Their hearts were bless'd, and there was nothing more
 On earth for them to pray for or deplore.

Their every wish had now been gratified ;
Their every woe in joy's fulfilment died ;
And it was bliss to think and feel and know
That love for them retained its earlier glow ;
And nothing more remained for either breast,
Than with that love to bless and to be bless'd.

XXIV.

Oh God ! if there be aught on earth divine,
To show that thou wilt still in mercy shine,
'Tis when two hearts like these, no matter whether
In grief or gladness, come again together !

NOTES.



NOTES.

NOTE 1.

When the voice of the Prophet first timidly rose. --Page 13.

THREE years were silently employed in the conversion of fourteen proselytes — the first fruits of his (Mahomet's) mission.

NOTE 2.

When the men of Medina were summoned away

To strengthen the host whom Heraclius found.—Page 14.

(See note 12.)

NOTE 3.

Where Othud was red with the blood of his flight—Page 15.

The second battle of the faithful was fought on Mount Othud, which stands six miles north of Medina.

NOTE 4.

The "Sword of God"—the Despot of the mind—Page 23.

In the nocturnal council of the camp, he (Khaled) was chosen to

command: his skilful evolutions of the ensuing day secured either the victory or the retreat of the Saracens; and Khaled is renowned among his brethren and his enemies, by the glorious appellation of *the Sword of God*.—GIBBON.

NOTE 5.

And Gabala in distant horror stood.—Page 23.

The Saracens were conducted through the territories of Gabala and Laodicea at a cautious distance from the walls of the cities, the rain was incessant—the night was dark, a single mountain separated them from the Roman army.

With the dawn of day the prospect again cleared, and they saw before them, in a pleasant valley the tents of Damascus. After a short interval of repose and prayer, Khaled divided his cavalry into four squadrons, committing the first to his faithful Derar, and reserving the last for himself. They successively rushed on the promiscuous multitude, insufficiently provided with arms, and already vanquished by sorrow and fatigue. Except a captive who was pardoned and dismissed, the Arabs enjoyed the satisfaction of believing that not a Christian of either sex escaped the edge of their scimitars.

NOTE 6.

And give those trembling portals to thy trust.—Page 24.

While one hundred chosen deputies were negotiating with the venerable and moderate Saracen commander, Abu Obeidah, the terms of the surrender of Damascus, the opposite quarter of the city was betrayed.

NOTE 7.

Thy shrieking strife, ungrateful Aiznadin.—Page 25.

Here a battle was fought on the 13th July 633, from which, after two successive engagements, “the remains of the imperial army fled to Antioch or Cæsarea or Damascus, and the death of four hundred and seventy Moslems was compensated by the opinion, that they had sent to hell above 50,000 of the infidels.

NOTE 8.

When Heaven’s prophetic inspiration beam’d.—Page 27.

That impositions of this character were frequently used, to delude the undecided and confirm the enthusiastic; nay, converted into the most active and successful weapons of Mahomet’s ambition, is too notorious to need the citation of even one of the many illustrations with which the history of that wonderful man unsparingly furnishes us.

NOTE 10.

As those which light the bowers of Paradise

Dwell only on the lover they adore.—Page 34.

(See note 23.)

NOTE 11.

She furl’d her pinions into plumy rest.—Page 35.

The DIVES are all males, and the PERIES all females; a compliment to the sex! —D. ISRAELI’S ROMANCES,

NOTE 12.

*Soon Battle's trumpet-song rang out to call
Medina's gathering men from bow'r and hall.*—Page 38.

It was incumbent on the Saracens to exert the full powers of their valour and enthusiasm, against the forces of the emperor, (Heraclius) who was taught by repeated losses, that the rovers of the desert had undertaken, and would speedily achieve a regular and permanent conquest. From the provinces of Europe and Asia, four score thousand soldiers were transported by sea and land to Antioch and Cæsarea: the light troops of the army consisted of sixty thousand Christian Arabs of the tribe of Gassan. Under the banner of Jabalah, the last of their princes, they marched in the van; and it was a maxim of the Greeks, that, for the purpose of cutting diamond, a diamond was the most effectual. Heraclius withheld his person from the dangers of the field; but his presumption, or perhaps his despondency, suggested a peremptory order, that the fate of the province and the war should be decided by a single battle. The Syrians were attached to the standard of Rome and of the cross; but the noble, the citizen, the peasant, were exasperated by the injustice and cruelty of a licentious host, who oppressed them as subjects, and despised them as strangers and aliens. A report of these mighty preparations was conveyed to the Saracens in their camp of Emesa, and the chiefs, though resolved to fight, assembled a council; the faith of Abu Obeidah, would have expected on the same spot, the glory of martyrdom; the wisdom of Khaled advised an honorable retreat to the skirts of Palestine and Arabia, where they might await the succour of their friends and the attack of the unbelievers. A speedy messenger returned from the throne of Medina, with the blessings of Omar and Ali, the prayers of the widow of the Prophet and a reinforcement of eighty thousand Moslems.—GIBBON.

This is the reinforcement with a description of whose march from Medina the poem commences.

NOTE 13.

If, when from the concealing cave of Thor.—Page 39.

Three days Mahomet and his companion were concealed in this cave, at the distance of a league from Mecca, and, in the close of each evening, they received from the son and daughter of Abubeker a secret supply of intelligence and food. The diligence of the Koreish (the people of Mecca) explored every haunt in the neighbourhood of the City: they arrived at the entrance of the cavern, but the providential deceit of a spider's web and a pigeon's nest is supposed to convince them that the place was solitary and inviolate. "We are only two," said the trembling Abubeker. "There is a third" replied the Prophet, "it is God himself." No sooner was the pursuit abated, than the two fugitives issued from the rock and mounted their camels: on the road to Medina they were overtaken by the emissaries of the Koreish; they redeemed themselves with prayers and promises from their hands. In this eventful moment, the lance of an Arab might have changed the history of the world.—GIBBON.

NOTE 14.

Like the waves round Cleopatra's golden prow.—Page 39.

The barge she sate in, like a burnished throne,
Burned on the waters: the poop was beaten gold:
Purple the sails and so perfumed, that
The winds were love-sick with them: the oars were silver.

SHAKESPEARE.

NOTE 15.

And Tabor once the glorious and the holy.—Page 39.

Tabor was, until a comparatively recent period, *believed* to be the Mount of the Redeemer's transfiguration : indeed even now the modern opinion is merely theoretic. I have therefore, being at perfect freedom to advantage myself of the general indecision, adhered to the original belief.

NOTE 16.

*But thou, Tiberias ! seem'st not half so bright
As ere thy banks were crimson'd with that fight.* — Page 40.

In the neighbourhood of Bosra, the springs of Mount Hermon descend in a torrent to the plain of Decapolis or ten cities : and the Hieromax, a name which has been corrupted to Yermuk, is lost, after a short course, in the lake of Tiberias. The banks of this obscure stream were illustrated by a long and bloody encounter. — GIBBON.

NOTE 17.

*Even when the hostile city of his birth
Proclaim'd his life a plague-spot on the earth.* — Page 40.

Abu Sophian, a zealous votary of the Idols, and a mortal foe of the line of Hashem, convened an assembly of the Koreishites and their allies to decide the fate of the Apostle. His imprisonment might provoke the despair of his enthusiasm, and the exile of an eloquent and popular fanatic would diffuse the mischief through the provinces of Arabia. His death was resolved, and they agreed that a sword from each tribe should be buried in his heart, to divide the guilt of his blood, and baffle the vengeance of the Hashemites. — GIBBON.

NOTE 18.

Until that eagle-hearted Hashemite — Page 41

He (Mahomet) sprung from the family of Hashem, the most illustrious of the Arabs, the prince of Mecca, and the hereditary guardian of the Caaba.

NOTE 19.

*And Mecca's wandering exile found a throne
Circled with men and arms, as with a zone —
A throne whose power extensively embrac'd
In its pernicious clasp the turban'd East. — Page 41.*

After a perilous and rapid journey along the sea-coast, he halted at Koba, two miles from the City, and made his public entry into Medina sixteen days after his flight from Mecca. Five hundred of the citizens advanced to meet him; he was mounted on a she-camel, an umbrella shaded his head, and a turban was unfurled before him to supply the deficiency of a standard. His bravest disciples, who had been scattered by the storm of his fortunes, assembled round his person, and the equal though various merit of the Moslems was distinguished by the names of Mohagerians and Ansars, the fugitives of Mecca and the auxiliaries of Medina.

The choice of an independent people exalted the fugitive of Mecca to the rank of a sovereign, and he was invested with the just prerogative of forming alliances and of waging offensive or defensive wars.—GIBBON

The ambassadors who knelt before the throne of Medina were as numerous (says the Arabian proverb) as the dates that fall from the maturity of the palm-tree. — OCKLEY's History of the Saracens.

NOTE 20.

It heard and felt the Hourî's tender sigh.—Page 42.

In a recent action, under the walls of Emesa, an Arabian youth was heard aloud to exclaim, “methinks I see the black-eyed girls looking upon me; one of whom, should she appear in this world, all mankind would die for love of her. And I see in the hand of one of them, a handkerchief of green silk, a cap of precious stones, and she beckons me, and calls out, “come hither quickly for I love thee.”

NOTE 21.

Their bright bowls from the sacred Zenzibil.—Page 45.

And their attendants shall go round about unto them with vessels of silver, and goblets — the bottles shall be bottles of silver, shining like glass, they shall determine the measure thereof by their wish, and therein shall be given to drink a cup of wine mixed with the water of Zenzibil. — SALE's translation of the Koran.

NOTE 22.

*Where, laid on silken couches they repose,
Culling the ripe pomegranate as it grows.* — Page 45.

They shall repose on couches, the linings whereof shall be of thick silk interwoven with gold — and the fruit of the two gardens shall be near at hand to gather. — SALES translation of the Koran.

NOTE 23.

*Pure creatures ! whose dark eyes had ne'er till now
Seen passion's sun-burst light a hero's brow ! — Page 46.*

Therein shall receive them beauteous damsels, refraining their eyes from beholding any besides their spouses.

NOTE 24.

*Amlas' pomegranates and the grape that showers
Its clustering wealth thro' Melah's blushing bowers — Page 46.*

The desert was composed of pomegranates of the growth of Amlas and of Tiri, of apples of Exhlat, of grapes of Melah and of Sevice, and of pears of Ispahan. — PERSIAN AND TURKISH TALES.

NOTE 25.

As doth the sad Cephalica from day. — Page 49.

He procured a grassy couch where the madhucca had spread its downy leaves, and where a luxurious and perfumed shade was afforded by the Cephalica, whose flowers unfold their bloom and odour to the sighs of night, and droop and wither beneath the first ray the sun darts over its fragile loveliness. — THE MISSIONARY.

NOTE 26.

At noon the "Acbar" chas'd the foes' retreating — Page 50.

As often as he smote a rebel, he shouted the Allah Acbar " God is

victorious," and in the nocturnal battle, he was heard to repeat four hundred times that tremendous exclamation. — GIBBON.

NOTE 27.

When like the Nubian mirage they appear'd — Page 57.

During the whole day's march, we were surrounded on all sides by lakes of Mirage, called by the Arabs *Serab*.

Its colour was of the purest azure, and so clear that the shadows of the mountain which bordered the horizon, were reflected on it with the greatest precision, and the delusion of its being a sheet of water was thus rendered still more perfect. I had often seen the mirage in Syria and Egypt, but always found it of a whitish colour, rather resembling a morning mist, seldom lying steady on the plains, but in continual vibration; but here it was very different, and had the most perfect resemblance to water.

The appearance of water approached also much nearer than in Syria and Egypt, being often not more than two hundred paces from us, whereas I had never seen it before at a distance of less than half a mile. There were at one time about a dozen of these false lakes round us, each separated from the other, and for the most parts in the low grounds.

BURCKHARDT'S TRAVELS.

NOTE 28.

Like the damn'd souls of Eblis' halls. — Page 59.

Instantaneously, the haughty forehead of the intrepid Princess became corrugated with agony: she uttered a tremendous yell; and fixed, no more to be withdrawn, her right hand upon her heart, which was become a receptacle of eternal fire. — VATHEK.

NOTE 29.

The burning depth of sands they tried.—Page 66.

We had already sent some men to the wells early in the morning, to clear them of the sand, for notwithstanding the report of the caravan travellers which we received at Nabeh, our people still believed that some water might be procured here. But we found them sitting with melancholy countenances near the well, where they had been digging for several hours, without finding any thing but wet sand. Even the Bedouins now became alarmed; and nothing was left for us, but to endeavour to reach the Nile by forced marches, each of us had some water left, though not sufficient for a single day. Nedjeym is a collection of three or four wells, where the water oozes from the ground and collects in sand pits of twenty or thirty feet in depth. The wind often choaks these pits with sand, and almost every caravan that passes must be at the trouble of digging them out.—BURCKHARDT'S TRAVELS.

NOTE 30.

Was from the Prophet's city going.—Page 66.

It (Medina) was called Medinet el Nebbi—the city of the Prophet, in honor of Mahomet, from the period of the hegira.

NOTE 31.

And sprang to heaven the "Tecbir" loud.—Page 68.

This word so formidable in their holy wars is a verb active (says Ockley in his index) of the second conjugation, from KABBARA, which signifies saying ALLA ACBAR—God is most mighty.

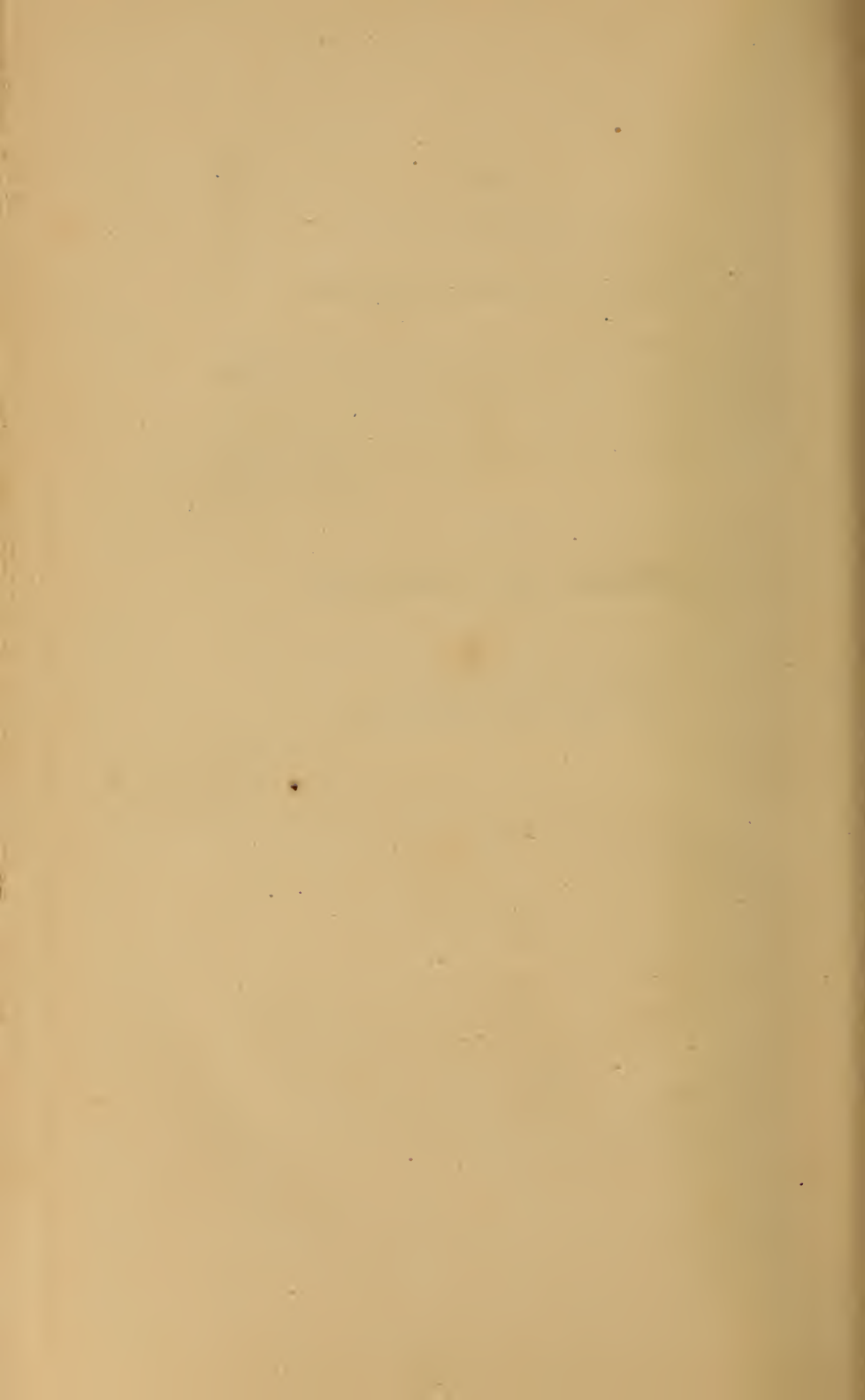
NOTE 32.

Down went the yellow banner's pride,—Page 72.

Khaled assumed his station in the front, his colleague was posted in the rear, that the disorder of the fugitives might be checked by his venerable aspect, and the sight of the yellow banner which Mahomet had displayed before the walls of Chaibar. The last line was occupied by the sister of Derar with the Arabian women who had enlisted in this holy war.—GIBBON.

THE
LAMENT OF HELLAS.

*Isque licet cœli regione remotos,
Mente Deos adiit : et, quæ natura negabat
Visibus humanis, oculis ea pectoris hausit.—OVID,*



THE
LAMENT OF HELLAS.

I.

THERE lies the wreath-and-helm-surmounted bier,¹
Where slumbers Freedom's wizard bard — the chief,
Whose rainbow mind bade Hellas cease to fear,
There sleeps he fall'n in his young summer leaf;
Mark you the wild, unostentatious grief
Of the funereal city, and the eye
Of Missolonghi's beauty, on whose brief
But dazzling dreamings burst the gathering cry
Of men who look'd and ask'd, and fear'd to get reply.

II.

Mark you the rocky hearts of Suli there,
That idol-chieftain's chosen citadel, ²—
Their fiery eyes dilated with despair,
For him they serv'd and lov'd so wildly well ;
And darkly too the word of terror fell
Into *thy* heart, Albania's mountaineer !
For fondly did thy hope of freedom dwell
Upon that star of promise—and the tear,
His summer-presence dried, flows doubly quick and clear.

III.

Free let it fall, the bosom's gushing rain—
For Hellas' gladdening soul was unprepar'd
For this tremendous shock : weep on, tho' vain
The anguish of thy heart, for thou hast shar'd
Like me—like millions, of the hope that rear'd
Its angel vision in the patriot's breast ;
'Twas but a light that flash'd and disappear'd,
And here we meet — Oh God ! to see our best,
Our dearest chieftain borne to his eternal rest.

IV.

Hellas ! who now shall soothe the bickering souls,
That boast and yet defile the name of Greek —
Who now will blush while the heart's current rolls,
In shame and sorrow down his guilty cheek?
Who when Ambition — Envy — Discord break
The bond that strong as adamant should be —
Who *then*, like oracle of old, shall speak
With worshipp'd voice, and bade for thine and thee,
The yielding hearts unite, and strike for liberty ?

V.

Alas ! alas for us ! yea even for all,
That we are doom'd, Defender of our Right !
To see thy setting and survive thy fall,
Ere thou could'st show the promis'd land of light
Whither thy harp and voice even *now* invite !
Yes ! tho' that harp and lip are mute and cold,
The obedient tones that felt thy magic might,
And the sad tale of Hellas' glory told,
Roll on the weeper's ear, as once their witchery roll'd !

VI.

BYRON's gigantic genius drew its fire
From out the Alpine lightning's, and its might
From the loud living thunders, and its ire,
Chang'd to disdain, from his internal blight
Of heart, and all of beautiful and bright,
From fountain — flow'r — lake — star — and moonlit glen :
He, to young Love's luxuriant delight,
Was the ador'd Apelles of the pen,
And with a won'drous skill search'd the dark minds of men.

VII.

The tainting nothingness of all that wears
An earth-stain in its nature, and grand
And stern sublimity Religion wears,
Darken'd or shone beneath his master hand ;
Life's treachery — when like a lake unfann'd
And glass'd with tempting brilliancy — was torn
From its deceitful sleep at his command,
And conquering truth became as 'twere reborn,
And brightening into strength like a young summer morn.

VIII.

If from the crowd that wonder of our age
And glory of our country turn'd away,
Treading his own mysterious pilgrimage,
Spurning the world and shunning its array
Of gilded folly glittering mid decay,
Like a magnificent ruin scatter'd o'er
With sunbeams, which in brightening but betray
Thro' the green ivy, columns rent and hoar,
And serve but to illume its desolation more ;—

IX.

If from those scenes where folly — fashion — fame
Revel as tho' the *soul* were wanted there,
To turn away, be but to earn the name
Of misanthrope, O ! quickly let me share
That enviable title !—few feel here,
In this dark world, the fellow-ship of love ;
The friend will mingle with thy wrongs his tear,
And yet doth he a very Judas prove : —
How oft, tho' young its years, gainst such this heart hath strove.

X.

'That blackening pang his festering bosom wrung,
Which all men *knew*, but one alone could *feel*,
Deeply the poison'd shaft his spirit stung,
Opening "a wound which time could never heal;"
Then rang the tongue of slander peal on peal,
'Till the responding world belied again,
And perfidy long struggled to congeal
'That glorious heart. Who thus would live mid men,
Even as a tortur'd lion when spears beset his den?

XI.

Of this enough ! the shuddering heart grows tir'd,
Tracing the perils of this billowy life.
He who hath into solitude retir'd
From the world's wiles, and the volcanic strife
Of those convulsing crimes with which 'tis rife,
Hath wisely done ! this sublunary vale,
Who hath e'er trodden, and escaped the knife
Of rancorous calumny ? Where storms prevail,
Few the returning barks unshatter'd by the gale !

XII.

He was not "altogether of such clay"
As fellow-man, nor was his mind the same
As they possess :—too far above decay,
Too bright, too glówing with immortal flame
Increasing in his strength, till he became
The spiritual compeer of those who gave
To immortality a worshipp'd name.—
The wise—the free—the noble and the brave,
Whom tyranny defiled not — man could ne'er enslave !

XIII.

With these he held communion ; these alone
Were sharers of his reveries sublime —
Temple — tower — pillar — statue breath'd a tone
Of their past glory, and their memory, Time
Tho' a long length of years, in every clime,
Hath rob'd in everlasting freshness. Man
But heard and felt and bow'd — but since her prime
Nature beheld no loftier spirit than
His, who that wond'rous course of gloom and glory ran.

XIV.

And who could breathe that spirit-stirring name
My essay's inspiration — nor entwine
Its hallow'd memory with the kindred theme
Of freedom's children, which his songs divine
Hath rung thro' every breast chain-bound like mine?
That name is an imperishable part
Of Hellas' history! in his decline
His latest prayer was for her, and the dart
To which his life-veins flow'd transfix'd her weeping heart,

XV.

My own poor suffering Greece! alas she feels
Deeply and deadly the destructive blow,
Which, breaking her protecting shield, reveals
Her naked bosom to her bloody foe.
The gathering storm, around — above — below
Waits but the —
hark! its thunders are unbound.
War's lightnings flash — skies glare and red bolts glow —
Expiring shrieks and crackling flames resound;
And domes descending crash, tearing the smoking ground.

XVI.

Ipsariots do your liberties expire
Tamely ? must ye but blush your fathers bled ?
Your waves all lightning and your fields all fire ;
Fierce — red and fleet the levelling flame is led.
Oh ! for “ a remnant of the Spartan dead ! ”
To snatch the thunder from the tyrants’ hand
And hurl them downward to that fiery bed !
But the red element’s burning arm expand,
Blackening the fated isle, and spread from strand to strand.

XVII.

Vain is the hope — the prayer — the shriek for life,
Of those who bend beneath the shock of war
When no brave foes contend in noble strife,
And vengeance only guides the conqueror’s car ;
Even the wild cry of woman will not mar
The step of desolation ! Vengeance’ laws
Annul humanity’s—and fierce and far
If she fly on, nor yet some phalanx draws
A barrier of defence, her sabre knows no pause ;

XVIII.

But on and on, and madly on she flies,
And drinking seas of blood cries out for more,
Unsated till her quivering victim dies,
Or her wild thirst be slak'd with her own gore.
And thus, Ipsara ! round thy ruin'd shore
Did the remorseless fiend of vengeance dash,
Till agony's shriek was silenc'd in the roar
Of war's exulting thunders, and their flash
Saw thy high fortress fall with a volcanic crash.

XIX.

Thou stand'st in ruins mid those classic isles
Whose names, like History's sunlight, shine afar —
Confederated tyranny reviles
Thy feelings and thy God — but can they mar
The whelming shock of thy avenging war ?
Thou hast done nobly, check'd the Moslem's strides,
And struck from Slavery's hand the scimitar :
Few more such glorious deeds, and Freedom rides
Triumphant o'er the Ægean's undisputed tides !

XX.

Nurse of creation's mightiest ! not in vain
The broken statue — the demolished wall —
The prostrate column and the ruin'd fane
Fresh to the hearts of Hellenists recal
Their children's bondage and their country's fall !
Offspring of hero-fathers ! wave and plain —
Mycenæ — Salamis — Athens — Argos, all
These soul-exciting monuments retain —
Broken is the tyrant's bow, and burst the bonds man's chain.

XXI.

Yes ! every step of thy celestial clime
Is peopled with bright recollections ! not
A temple — column — tower, or tomb, which Time
Hath not all razed or ruin'd, but is fraught
With some proud lesson, some ennobling thought ;
There is a worldless eloquence which speaks
To the charm'd soul from each enchanting spot ;
A spirit and a spell whose magic wakes
In cities — plains and groves — mountains and hills and lakes.

XXII.

Here stand the tombs that sepulchre the sleep
Of Lacedemon's immolated band —
Here Salamis' victorious waters sleep,
Amid the mountain Titans of her strand ; —
There Simois wanders thro' the desolate land
Unlike that rapid river which of yore³
Shook with the strife of Phrygia's thousands, and
Wheeling its sounding way all swoln with gore,
Limbs — trunks and grappling foes on its red waters bore !

XXIII.

The vast Acropolis — the Parthenon —
In awful desolation both appear !
How is their beauty fall'n — their glory gone —
The temple plunder'd of its statues fair —
Which none should e'er behold but to revere,
Sculptur'd by Phidias' school. The hand of Time
Hath not alone effected ruin there,—
Man, who should guard each relic of that clime,
Hath shamelessly destroyed its monuments sublime !

XXIV.

Yet thou need'st not those records of far time,
Those monumental glories, to inspire
The enthusiastic spirits of thy clime
With indignation and ancestral fire !
The son is not unworthy of his sire !
The chain — the scourge — the Moslem's reign of woes —
Thy spirit's long suppress'd but quenchless ire,
Like Hecla burning mid her clime of snows,
These rous'd thy lion-heart to spring upon its foes !

XXV.

Dread was Ipsara's vengeance as her fate ;
With freedom's own gigantic strength it fell ;
Her glory like her ruin consummate,
Has been a Siroc to the infidel.
But to the bright immortal isles that dwell
In ever living beauty round her shore,
Her name has been regeneration's spell.
Vain is the Islam thunders' fiery roar.
Once more art thou redeem'd — thy fetters burst once more !

XXVI.

Thro' the rous'd world had the electric tone
Of liberty gone forth, Greece could but share
The common glory, but she now alone
Crushes the Hydra in his reeking lair,
While to her mounting fame the jealous stare
Of an allied despotism still clings,
Beneath whose blighting influence none can dare
Look up from where the hell of slavery wrings
Life's life from out the heart, to prop the throne of kings.

XXVII.

The pander of oppression may exclaim,
"Greece is unfit to class among the free!"
Had she not seiz'd her brand and bow, the same
Might be repeated to eternity.
'Tis Tyranny's subterfuge — strike on and be
What thou wert, when less polish'd Tyrants brought
Nations to force thy pass, Thermopylæ!
Thou living record of red wonders wrought,
When men sprung into life as freedom's votaries ought!

XXVIII.

When I recal the inauspicious voice,
With which thy trembling Liberty first woke,
Bidding thy sons arise — awake — rejoice —
Dash off their bonds — annihilate their yoke,
The inspiring shout they utter'd when she spoke,
Their quick revenge — their valour's fiery play,
Which, as the thunder fells the mountain oak,
Shatter'd the Moslem's arbitrary sway,
And smote him to the dust whom they did once obey ;—

XXIX.

When I remember all, and turn to those
Who say that Freedom's light falls premature —
When I recal the long endured woes
Which made thy very slumbers insecure,
I marvel how thou could'st so long endure
The taunt — affront — oppression — injury
Of peace, and fame, — the murderer — the impure,
Making with unrestrain'd impunity
The very *home* a hell, where only heaven should be !

XXX.

He who could weep upon his chains should never —
Never subject his feelings to his lot,
But let them, like a storm-obeying river,
Boil till th' expanding soul be too oe'rfraught
For longer suffering. Who, that like thee fought,
Deserves not that maturely glorious boon,
For which the coward never sigh'd or sought?
Strike on — strike deeply — strike like men who've thrown
Life—hope—home—freedom—all, on their own strength alone.

XXXI.

The God of freedom aids thee — can'st thou fear —
The cause of Freedom fires thee — wilt thou yield?
The arm of Freedom guides thy onward spear,
And victory lights thy path on foam and field;
To Heaven's propitious throne thou hast appeal'd,
And Heaven hath plac'd the thunders in thy hand,
Before whose way thy withering foemen reel'd!
O! could I see thy freedom's sun expand,
Mother of arts and arms! gilding thy classic land —

XXXII.

O! could I see it, how exultingly
I'd yield my soul beneath its sacred light!
As in oriental climes the dying Parsee
Expires with a more dreamy, calm delight,
If his Sun-Deity, from his dazzling height
Shed glory on his death — O Heav'n! may I
Ne'er feel my spirit's plumage stir for flight,
Till Hellas' Freedom from her stormless sky
Shed glory on its path — then shall I camly die!

XXXIII.

Monarch of Song! couldst thou behold *that* day,
And see our banner's folds in freedom soar,
And hear our triumph-cannon's thundering play,
Along lost Scio's rocky island roar,
Telling the martyr sleepers round her shore,
That Greece and Greeks at length have reach'd the gaol,
For which, thro' fields of flame and floods of gore,
They fought,— then would thy exultation roll
The clouds of agony back that gloom'd thy parting soul.

XXXIV.

Yes! to the minstrel-martyr 'twas a hell
Of inward suffering, to be torn apart
From her, for whom he breath'd that wizard spell
Which rous'd the slave's and fir'd the freeman's heart.
Who that hath laid the noblest — holiest part
Of his affections upon Freedom's shrine,
Would not at victory's shout of triumph start
Away from thoughts of darkness, and resign
His spirit with a will less human than divine?

XXXV.

He had his faults? — then is mortality
Exempt from imperfections? was he not
A man — and such as thou wilt never see,
Land of my love! to soothe and share thy lot?
Thou'st friends in spoken prayer and silent thought,
But where is HE — self exil'd and alone,
Who leaving home and kindred deeply fraught
With vengeance for thy sufferings, hath thrown
Those spell-words to the winds to live and die thine own?

XXXVI.

Yet such were Byron's failings, they became
As light clouds floating by a summer sun,
All indistinct in the o'erwhelming flame
Of his unrivall'd glory. — But tis done—
The dim shore of eternity is won. —
The rash and bigot censurer must be mute ;
Be the prerogative assum'd by none —
HIM of the throne of life alone 'twill suit,
Whose mercy is his brightest — loftiest attribute !

XXXVII.

Not that sepulchral mystery of soul
Which, thro' its darkness if, like lunar light
Thro' midnight storm, one flash of brightness stole,
Shadow'd that flash, and all again was night —
Not that alone made him to human sight
Seem more than mortal, but that god-like zeal
For liberty, which with intense delight
Within him burn'd, and which all men must feel
Who ever heard, shall hear the power of his appeal !

XXXVIII.

He touch'd the lyre — the music from its frame
Was freedom's essence, and its precepts made
Mankind familiar with each soaring name,
Whose deeds of freeborn-valour are pourtray'd,
In characters of light that cannot fade,
On Roman and Hellenic page.— We find
Beneath the British sceptre men who've laid
Their glory's base, but where is *He* to bind
Our spirits to his will — the wizard of the mind ?

XXXIX.

His soul is mid the mighty shades that came
With spell and pow'r and majesty upon
His earliest dreams and thoughts, till they became
His spirit's idols.—Sparta — Marathon —
Olympus — Ida — Athos, all which won
That soul from the low earth around it lie.
Alas for earth ! her intellectual sun,
Whose blaze appear'd too powerful to die,
Alas for earth ! hath pass'd — his greatness hath gone by.

XL.

Alas for Freedom ! and the glorious strife
Of those who would be free, and those who mourn'd
Over their country's bondage, loathing life
Held at a Tyrant's will. — The heart that burn'd
For *universal* freedom lies inurn'd,
Pulseless and cold ; but his undying name
Ages shall consecrate, for we have learn'd
From him what mankind should be. May his fame
O'er slavery's ruins run like Ætna's liquid flame !

NOTES.

NOTE 1.

There lies the wreath-and-helm-surmounted bier

*Where slumbers Freedom's wizard Bard — the chief, —*Page 99.

In the midst of his, (Lord Byron's) own brigade, of the troops of the government, and of the whole population, on the shoulders of the officers of his corps, relieved occasionally by other Greeks, the most precious portion of his honoured remains was carried to the church, where lie the bodies of Marco Bozzari and of General Normann. There we laid them down, the coffin was a rude ill-constructed chest of wood; a black mantle served for a pall; and over it we placed a helmet and a sword, and a crown of laurel. But no funeral pomp could have left the impression, nor spoken the feelings of this simple ceremony.—

PARRY'S LAST DAYS OF LORD BYRON.

NOTE 2.

Mark you the rocky hearts of Suli there

*That idol-chieftain's chosen citadel.—*Page 100.

Lord Byron had taken a small corps of Suliotes into his own pay, and kept them about him as a body guard.—PARRY'S LAST DAYS, &c.

NOTE 3.

*Unlike that rapid river which of yore.—*Page 100.

Tydide, mene Iliacis occumbere campis

Non potuisse? tuaque animam hanc effundere dextra?

Sævus ubi, Æacidæ telo jacet Hector, ubi ingens

Sarpedon, ubi tot Simois correpta sub undis

Scuta virum galeasq: et fortia corpora volvit.

ÆNEIDOS, LIB. 1.

THE TUSCAN GIRL.

THE TUSCAN GIRL.

THE year had purpled into vintage time,
And thro' the gushing vallies of that clime,
Where Tuscany looks out with laughing eye
And sees no cloud along her classic sky,
Gather'd her youth — her beauty — and her health
To treasure in their Bachanalian wealth.

And there was one mid that exulting throng
Who wandered weakly, mournfully along,
Her brow was clouded and her azure eye
Look'd not in gladness on that kindred sky;

Yet scarce one summer faded since she felt
The happiest heart that in Val d'Arno dwelt,
She mingled with the youthful and the gay,
And broad and bright her path of pleasure lay.
But clouds will darken even the fairest flow'rs,
And Fiametta mourn'd those golden hours,
Which, she believ'd in her prophetic gloom,
Should ne'er again her form and face illumine.
That form as graceful as the cedar's height,
And that fair face like summer morning's light.

And why to earth was breathing beauty given,
If not to be a miniature of heaven,
To beam out blessings from her sinless brow,
And hear the voice of her adorer's vow?

She lov'd and was belov'd as beauty should,
When as the form is fair the heart is good,
And her's was pure and cloudless, crime nor trace
Of sorrow stain'd or dimm'd that holy place!

Her young Antonio, even from a child,
Was brave, romantic, passionate and wild:

He met — beheld — admir'd — ador'd the girl,
With her young lip of balm and eye of pearl :
With a responding flame *her* bosom burn'd,
And sigh for sigh and love for love return'd.

One evening to Antonio's dwelling came
A gallant stripling, on a barb of flame,
A snow-white plume his crimson bonnet bore
Which gently wav'd his lofty forehead o'er,
His mantle was a blaze of dazzling gold,
O'er which with rival grace his ringlets roll'd :
And gems like stars spangled the azure vest
Which closely fitted his Herculean breast.

He proudly wav'd his hand, and backward drew
On either side his princely retinue,
Then doff'd his bonnet with a martial grace,
And show'd the bronzed beauty of his face:

Apart he led Antonio from the gaze
Of eyes that lit with questioning amaze ;
But nothing could the inmates hear or see,
To lull their doubts, all — all was mystery.

Antonio was not hence so often seen
In the Val d'Arno as he once had been,
And she grew comfortless and knew not why
Her own — her fond one should not still be nigh.

* * * * *
* * * * *

Thro' the wak'd city the death trumpet rang,
But there no bosom throb'd with sorrow's pang;
All was exultance as the Helvetian lines
Led forth the robber of the Appenines.

His name had been a proverb in the land
That felt the force of his terrific brand,
And vainly searched and climb'd the hireling Swiss
The rocky haunt — the mountain precipice,
But Treachery show'd the outlaw's cave at length
Which mock'd a hundred bayonets' searching strength.

Awhile he stood in thought — then seiz'd his brand
And at the cavern's entrance took his stand.
And there he stood like desert deer at bay,
Till round his brand a crimson breast-work lay ;

No brother shar'd — beheld his brave despair,
Lonely he battled in his ringing lair ;
Nor stepp'd his foes beyond its gory brink,
Till, when his glutt'd brand refus'd to drink,
He bled — reel'd — struggled — sank, senseless and cold,
And o'er his form the armed tempest roll'd.

They cast him to a dungeon's gloom, and there
Forsook him to his weakness and despair.
He linger'd on wither'd and wild tho' young,
Fetters around his wounded body clung,
The only living thing within that tomb
All fear and silence — solitude and gloom—
Save when some victim's groan, by torture wrung,
Thro' the replying walls its echo flung,
And with it all the thoughts and pangs and fears
Anticipated condemnation wears.

No health — no hope — no aperture was there
To bless the mangled criminal that lay
Sighing the life he wildly curs'd away,
With one refreshing breath of healthy air,
Or one beloved glimpse of passing day.

The hir'd Helvetians led the culprit out,
Beneath the justice-flag's avenging flout ;
From hill and vale the gathering crowd came on,
To see — to mock that living skeleton.
And on he went, wasted and pale and weak,
The wild mind warring still in eye and cheek ;
And thro' the dreadful pageant you might see
The lips at moments trembling lividly :
He gaz'd not — glanc'd not on the circling crowd,
He heard not — heeded not the voices loud
That chang'd from joy, and as he onward went
Gave to the murmuring winds their deep lament.
So young — so fair — so worn — so desolate,
Who could not — would not mourn his early fate ?
So chang'd was he his mother might not trace
A living feature of Antonio's face !

Antonio ? — yes, Antonio — it is he !
Look on that brow — that eye — that symmetry —
How dimm'd and sunk and chang'd — but chains will change
The form that lov'd the mountain's rugged range.
More dim that eye — more pale that pallid cheek
Become and —

Hark ! heard you that thrilling shriek ?

What form of beauty bursts so wildly fair,
 Thro' the dividing crowd — thro' sword and spear?
 Heav'ns! how her pale lips press his drooping face, —
 Why meets it not her passionate embrace?
 He struggles — totters — falls. Oh! tear not now
 His Fiametta from that icy brow!
 "He lives — he breathes — his shatter'd bosom stirs."

"Fool! think you so, 'tis not his breast but hers.*"

"Guards! Florentines! bear ye the dead away
 "Her heart is broken — his is lifeless clay!"

* *Officer.* Signor! the boat is at the shore — the wind
 Is rising — we are ready to attend you.

Jac. Fos. And I to be attended, Once more, father,
 Your hand!

Dogue. Take it. Alas! how thine own trembles!

Jac. Fos. No — you mistake; 'tis yours that shakes, my father.

THE TWO FOSCARI.

MISCELLANEOUS.

MISCELLANEOUS.

THE SUICIDE.

SHE sate in solitude — it was a green
And shadowy woodland, and the sunbeams fell
Thro' the dark foliage on the sleeping lake
Like starry diamonds o'er the nightly heaven.
A rock arose behind her, o'er whose summit,
A blossom'd hawthorn hung in silvery beauty,
As hang the white hairs o'er the brow of age.
Beneath her feet the yellow cowslips shone,
Like the long locks of clustering gold that curl'd
In waving luxury down her Phidian shoulders.

At either side a bank of violets
Droop'd in the sunset gaze their modest azure,
Like her blue brilliant eyes which seldom rais'd
Their meek tranquillity to that pure heaven,
But when they did, they showed a deep devotion,
In which the whole soul beam'd its glory forth.
Her cheek was like the lily that arose
In pale and drooping beauty by her side —
Her look was that of uncomplaining grief —
A sorrow which her breast had treasur'd up
With such a deep fidelity, and made
The ruler of her solitary mind,
That every tear was dried up in its fount,
And every thought seal'd in unbroken silence ;
Yet the soft shadow that repos'd upon
Her tranquil face, seem'd but a twilight shade
Sleeping in calmness o'er a beauteous landscape.

At length she went forth from the fragrant seat,
And the bright flow'rs that seem'd to feel her presence,
Sadden'd and droop'd upon the earth in tears,
And seem'd to have yielded up their bloom and beauty
As tho' they liv'd by gazing on her face.

She stood upon the water's bank and look'd
The Genius of the lake — and flinging back
The golden locks from off her snowy brow
She took forth from her breast, whose hectic heave
Alone betray'd the secret of her woe,
(For you might else have deem'd it sickness' hue
Which marbled o'er her angel countenance.)
A little miniature — too oft the sole
Gem-ornamented relic that reclines
Upon some plunder'd breast, a substitute
For that more precious gem that slept beneath
But which the pearly East can ne'er restore.

Awhile she view'd it — wept, and weeping smil'd,
But brief that smile as lightning, and she flung
The bauble to the wave, and wildly lifting
Her flashing eye to heaven and then to earth,
As if to take of both a last farewell,
Plung'd into the affrighted lake that sent
Its startled voice thro' the deep woodland round.

Thus perish'd one of earth's unfortunate —
Her beauty brighter than the morning star —

Her bosom desolate — her peace destroy'd —
Her name unbreath'd — her history untold. —
One whose bright form what pen may dare to picture?
The Seraph and the Suicide!

THE EXILE.

Those mountains are as bright with morn — these billows are as blue,
And the deep glens are green as those mid which my boyhood grew,
And beauty's eyes that beam around, so full of mirth and mind,
Are not less bright and beautiful than those I've left behind.

But when I view those mountains that, girt with forests, rise
In their tremendous grandeur — the pillars of the skies —
I gaze awhile in wonder, but wizard memory speaks,
And to my own — my native hills, this bursting spirit breaks.

And when I view and bless thy wave, so fearless and so free,
Careering thro' its chainless world — the child of liberty,
I only weep and think upon my own Atlantic waves,
That roll as if in mockery round a land of sleeping slaves.

But let me hear that strain again, there's something in the lay
That breathes so fresh a feeling of the glorious olden day,
Ere the invading stranger broke our island's bosom rest,
And chang'd into a vassal mart the Eden of the West.

'Twas from Mononia's mountain heights, at summer twilight, first
I heard that song of freedom o'er the broad Atlantic burst,
Then first I felt this struggling soul awaken and expand,
And wing its way to other times — the glorious and the grand.

And listening to *thy* song of life I deem'd myself again
Amid the scenes of other times — the son of other men —
The hero-men by chains untouch'd — by slavery uncontroll'd,
And fearless as the surge that round their island-dwelling roll'd.

Land of my birth — my love — my prayer ; of mountain and of glen,
Haply thy shore the Exile's foot may never meet again ;
Yet be it so — I envy not the patriot hearts that sigh
Over each throb thy wild heart gives—each tear that wets thine eye.

Enough — enough for this lorn heart to know thou livest on,
Like a wreck'd ship amid the storm, when every hope is gone,
When the few brave but barkless friends are looking o'er the wave,
Distracted and despairing on the wreck they cannot save.

'Tis not the first — 'tis not the last, with which this heart must swell,
For oft 'tis heaven to turn to thee, and sigh “farewell — farewell !”
Once more farewell, my worshipp'd isle, enough for me remains
To know — to feel thou'rt still a land of beauty and of chains.

ON THE DEATH OF MR. R. H.

How weary the path of existence' day,
When the few warm friends that bound us
Have fallen witheringly away,
In their youth and beauty round us.

When the grave hath robb'd our hearts of all,
And comes the returning morrow,
Without a ray of hope to fall
On our bosom's cloudy sorrow.

And who can look on thy brow of snow
With its blue veins coldly straying,
Where but a few hours past, the glow
Of the golden mind was playing.—

On that livid lip and that lifeless hand,
Whose touch had learn'd to give
Obedience to the mind's command,
And bade the canvas live, —

Who mark the pale and placid smile
That lingers coldly bright,
Like the lonely beam of a winter moon
Thro' the chill and silent night, —

Who see thee thus nor feel with dread
His shuddering bosom leaping,
When *thou* amid the mouldering dead,
The eternal sleep art sleeping ?

Thus every promise fades away,
From our land of chains and sorrow ;
To the beam that lighted our hearts to-day,
We may turn in vain to-morrow.

Thy sainted virtues 'twere vain to tell
To those who knew thee not ;—
And by the hearts who knew thee well,
When will they be forgot ?

STANZAS.

I.

BRIGHT are the sky and earth, but more the deep
And silent lake, that looks, beneath the ray,
As doth a lovely woman in her sleep,
When golden thoughts of past existence play
Along her tranquil features. For away
Brighten the white walls of the dreaming town —
The monarch hill that shades the distant bay,
Hath bound his rough brows with a beamy crown,
And round his ebon throne the savage forests frown.

II.

Hark ! by the echoing shore awakes a tone !
A joyous tone which every heart can wake,
Within whose empire Love hath made a throne
Which storms have fail'd to shadow or to shake :
But when shall I again, by hill or lake —
Yes when, O God ! *when* will the songless string
Of this lorn heart forgettingly forsake
Its silence and its solitude, and sing
The tones of love it breath'd in the soul's leafy spring ?

III.

Oh never, never more ! it is not now,
The gift of time or kingdoms to restore
The young enchantress, whose mormoreal brow
The waving wealth of golden ringlets bore,
That often droop'd their silky curtain o'er
My slumbers pillow'd on her beating breast,
And her sweet voice to which my spirit's core
Sung as the wind-harp to the bidding West —
No, never more shall I be thus divinely blest !

IV.

What now are earth and beauty's witchery —
Am I not lost and desolate and lone —
The living forms whom I around me see
I may not mingle with :—a gulf is thrown
Between me and my fellows ; and my moan
Must die along the friendless void, for she
Who bound my spirit to the earth hath flown
Beyond the stars, leaving but memory,
The wide world and the life which is not life — to me.

IV.

Yet peace is not of her celestial rest,
If to look down upon this earth, and hear
The Samiel-anguish of the desert breast
Whose love had been her life — her Eden here,
Be granted in that Seraph-peopled sphere !
Oh Thyrza ! Thyrza ! are the moments o'er
When from the moonlight valley to thy ear —
Thy listening ear the vassal breezes bore
Such sounds as these that come along the echoing shore ?

IV.

Oh Thyrza ! Thyrza ! shall I never be
Enfranchised from this dark, terrestrial hell —
Shall not my fever'd spirit ever see
The home of life and light where thou dost dwell —
My only wish'd for heav'n ! — but, lo ! the swell
Of the awaking ocean, by the grey
Birth-light of morn is faintly ting'd — farewell,
Sweet hour of pensive thought ! I must away
To endure the curse that chains my spirit down to clay.

SACRED MELODY.

I.

WHEN will the veil, Oh God ! that hides thee now,
Be drawn aside from thy Almighty brow ;

And when shall I salvation's light behold ?
Weary am I and worn with wandering,
Then when — Oh ! when shall my returning wing
Mid heav'ns bright land its weary plumage fold ?

II.

In this dark world the wicked one is strong,
His toils are spread around me, and I long
To walk in peace thy spirit-land above ;
Then hear my prayer, Oh God ! and summon back
Thy wanderer from his bleak and billowy track
To feel thy presence and to share thy love !

A SKETCH.

I saw that beauty in her blooming youth,
When every look was full of laughing life,
And every word was music ; and the lip,
The ripe lip luscious as autumnal fruit ;
And the unchanging cheeks appear'd like rose beds,
Where laughing Cupids lay in sleepless bliss ;
I saw her then, the Venus of few summers,
The sinless, — thoughtless, sorrowless girl of beauty :
But oh ! how desolate — how alter'd now !
I know not how it is, but we behold
The brightest — fairest — tenderest flowers more subject
To the destroying finger of decay
Than the rank weeds that fill our path with thorns.
Yes ! of the flower that met the eye of morn,
Array'd in liquid pearls and perfum'd beauty,
What have we but the lifeless recollection ?
And it is thus with thee, thou silent mourner !
Where — where are now the silky locks that wreath'd

Awhile above thine ivory brow, and then
Veil'd with their shining rings thy swan-like neck ?
Where are the fires of holy lustre now,
That in thy life's young calmness, planet-like,
Beam'd from thy deep blue eye's unclouded heaven,
And which I quenchless deem'd ? — where, where are they,
To which the young, the wealthy and the proud,
Intently turn'd their gaze to read their fate,
As look Astrologers unto the stars.
And oh ! the soul — the stormless sunny soul,
That never — never set upon thy brow —
Where is it — where the balmy thoughts that liv'd
Within thy cloudless paradise of mind —
Where is the heart that never slumber'd then,
But to be borne on fragrant wings, and mount
Up into realms of life and light and triumph ?
Alas ! the cold and dreary light that comes
Along thy darken'd features only shows
That bliss and beauty *have been* dwellers there —
That all *is* dark and desolate within.
Thy tresses are dishevelled, and that brow
Is furrow'd up by thought — and the blue eyes,
That laugh'd and shone and warm'd like summer sunbeams,

Are fixed on vacancy : — along thy cheek
The rose hath perished, and upon its site
The suffering soul hath written “ Misery.”

And is't for this we plough life's ocean-desert
Bristling with watery Alps, whose ridgy peaks,
Crested with surfy snow, as we ascend,
But lift us nearer to more lofty terrors ?
Is it for this we've watch'd with fever'd eye
And throbbing heart, the one lone passion-star
That beam'd along our storm-convulsed way —
The star that first allur'd us to the deep,
And smil'd upon our woes, as tho' that smile
Were lighted up with a bright consciousness
Of its own power and willingness to save,
And then suddenly drooping o'er its light
Some tempest-bearing cloud, hears to the rush
And battling roll of winds and waves and thunders,
Nor casts one glance to light our dissolution ?
Is it for this we've watched the sinless couch
Of sleeping infancy, and there beheld
The springing bud that fill'd our hearts with promise
And life and love and peace and exultation ?

Is it for this —

But what have we to learn

That we have not already learn'd and felt?

Each heart that feels mortality is but

A record of hereditary ill.

STANZAS.

I.

GIVE me the lyre — the lyre of memory's tone,
That I may make it eloquent of me
And of my feelings ! When the spell hath flown,
That bound us earthward, whither may we flee,
If not to thee, almighty Minstrelsy ?
Youth — friendship — hope — love's dreams of dawning bliss,
Illumining the future — all shall be
As winter sunshine ; but a sound like this,
Sung to the ear of night from wave-wash'd precipice,

II.

Is an eternal soother of the heart ;—
The heart that hath gone forth amid the world,
Undimm'd by sorrow — undefil'd by art —
Whose tranquil wave life's breath had scarcely curl'd,
When the wild tempest's banner was unfurl'd —
The heart that bled and battled thro' the throng
On whom the burning bolts of death were hurl'd,
And lifting Virtue's ægis, rush'd along
From Passion's storm and reach'd his peaceful hills of song.

III.

And here I sit, existence' tumult pass'd —
The lone blue world of waters spread before me,
Their rippling music on the calm shore cast,
And th' heav'ns, all pure and starry, sparkling o'er me :
What are my ills if they to you restore me,
Hills of the eagle's pride and torrent's roar !
Ocean ! that on thy snow-white bosom bore me
To thee thy nurseling bard returns once more,
To wake his lyre along thy solitary shore.

IV.

But he returns, alas ! not as he left
His rocky home of joys ! It recks not how
Of its young dreams his soul hath been bereft,
And of their false fair light his darken'd brow :
He feels that what he was he is not now !
Yet is it not rejuvenescent joy,
Thus to this haven of calm to steer his prow,
And wake to feelings, years could not destroy,
The humble lyre he swept when he was but a boy !

STANZAS FOR MUSIC.

WHY from him who once was dearest
Coldly turn away ;
And on the soul whose woe thou hearest
Dim thy beauty's ray ?
Yet even thus — the heart thou searest
Never can betray !

Will thy memory deign to hover
O'er the magic hours ;
And behold thy anxious lover,
Waiting mid his bow'rs,
For the oar that swept thee over
From thy father's towers ? —

Will it hear his soul repeating
His unbroken vows,
While the beams that lit our meeting,
Thro' the roof of boughs,
Show'd thy pleasure's pulses beating
O'er thy virgin brows ?

Wilt thou leave me then for ever
After hours like these —
Love's apostate — young deceiver !
Doth not vengeance seize,
With the mind's undying fever,
Her who loves and flees ?

But may such be ne'er the token
Of thy wrecking art —
Tho' the word of death is spoken —
Tho' in youth we part —
Tho' thy treachery hath broken,
This *too* faithful heart !

SERENADE.

HARK ! 'tis the sound of the gay guitar,
That sings on the breeze from the fields afar ;
Where young lovers meet by the starry skies,
To mingle the breath of their bosom's sighs !

The zephyrs play with the dreaming flowers —
Her smiles on the current the glad moon showers —
And the rose with sparkling eye receives
The dew-drop's kiss on her blushing leaves.

But the zephyr shall pass ere the morning rise —
The stream shall laugh when the lost moon dies —
And the dew will perish ;— but what shall sear
The heart of love that is beating here ?

My oar waits under thy lattice light ;
And the waters are mute as its rapid flight :
I wait but the beacon to guide my way —
I wait but the smile of thy beauty's ray.

Giuletta, awake ! below — above,
The sigh, the glance and the voice of Love
Beckon and call on souls like thine
To weave their spells while the moonbeams shine !

She comes ! she comes, like the evening star —
When it shines from its heaven of peace afar !
She comes like a Seraph when, beaming with smiles,
She welcomes some soul to the sainted isles !

STANZAS.

IN the balmy hush of evening,
 Along the silent shore,
When the red setting sun has ting'd
 The ocean's surface o'er ;
How soothing to the weary heart
 To wander and behold
Those waters chain'd in slumber,
 That heaven array'd in gold.

Or to gaze from some high mountain-top
 Upon the vallies down,
When Autumn's bronzing touch has turn'd
 The forest's beauty brown —
When seldom in the solitude,
 Some lingering flow'r appears,
Like the few fading joys that deck
 The autumn of our years.

And when the shrieking billows
 Reflect the lightning's light,
'Tis good to mark their Alpine strength
 Pursue its foaming flight ;
And hear from black and bursting clouds
 The living thunder's roll,
That voice of God — that sign of awe,
 That teacher of the soul.

And in that thunder's warning,
 And in that lightning's light,
To see his flash of anger,
 And hear his voice of might —
Bend down before his fiery wrath
 Amid that fearful strife,
And, trembling in our silent hearts,
 Acknowledge — this is life!

TO MY LYRE.

I.

THY voice hath sank to silence — it hath pass'd
Even as a dream-hour ! but the tones thou'st flung
Around still sink and swell upon the blast —
Hark ! hear'st thou not the rigid critic's tongue
Declare thou hast been impotently strung ?
Yea, I *too* feel I have but weakly striven
To rise from earth ; but to the eagle's young,
In its first trembling flutter, is it given
To cleave the clouds and dare the fiery orb of heaven ?

II.

Has earth *now* an Alcmena's son, to crush,
Even in the cradle of his infant sleep,
The circling serpents, — in the silent hush
Of nameless haunts do not the streamlets creep,
E're, strong as death, they rock the thundering steep ?
When morn comes upward from the mighty sea,
No beam of gladness gilds the billow's leap,
'Till more mature his reign of glory be —
Thus is it now, and *thus* it yet may be with thee !

III.

Yet if not so, enough remains for me
To sit once more my leafy homes among,
To hold companionship with only thee,
And give my days to solitude and song !
And be the critic's censure weak or strong,
This is thy solace — thou hast wak'd no strain
Which Virtue may condemn !

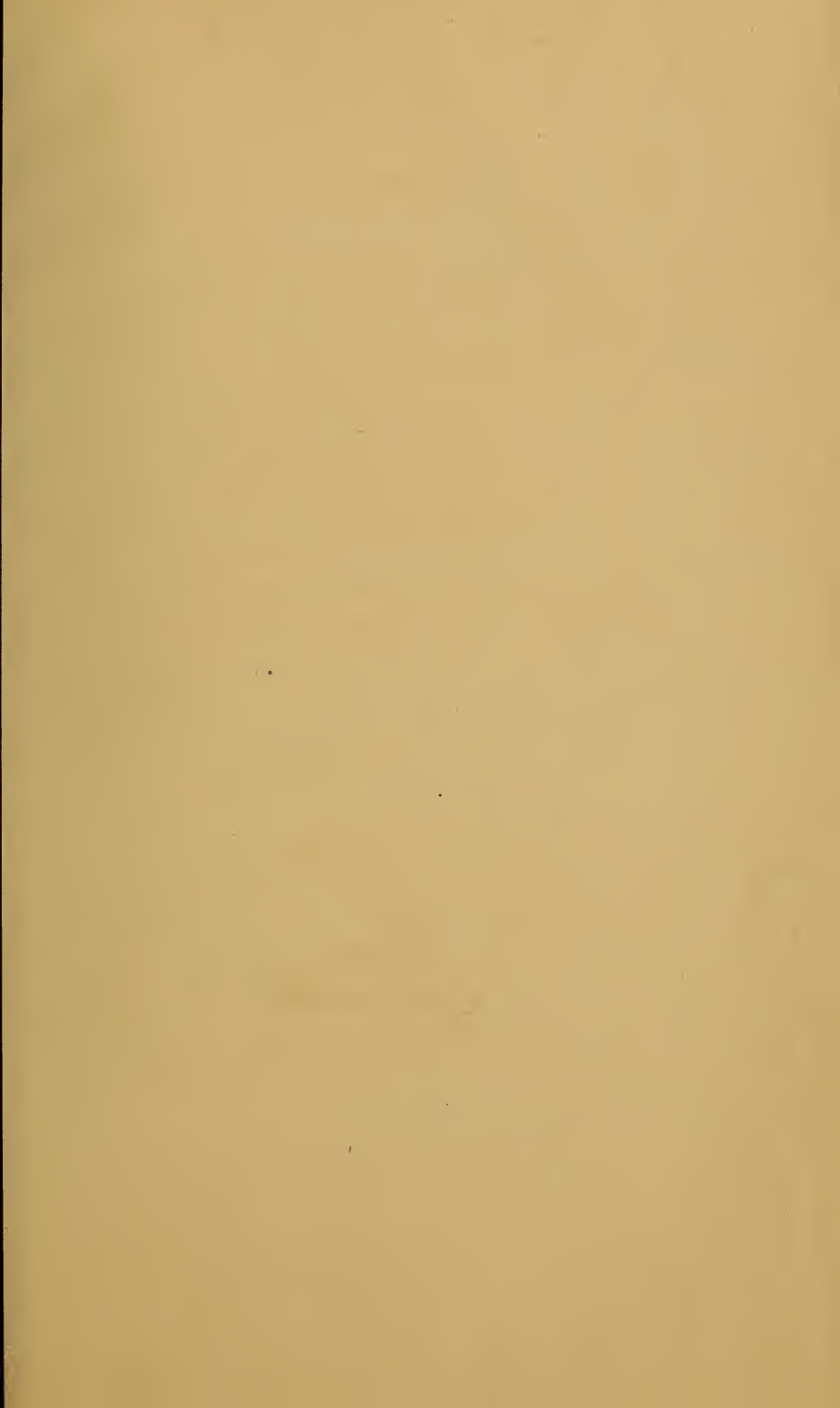
Dost thou not long

For that which dwells not in the paths of men —
The voice of peace ? — go, seek thy home of hills again !

THE END.

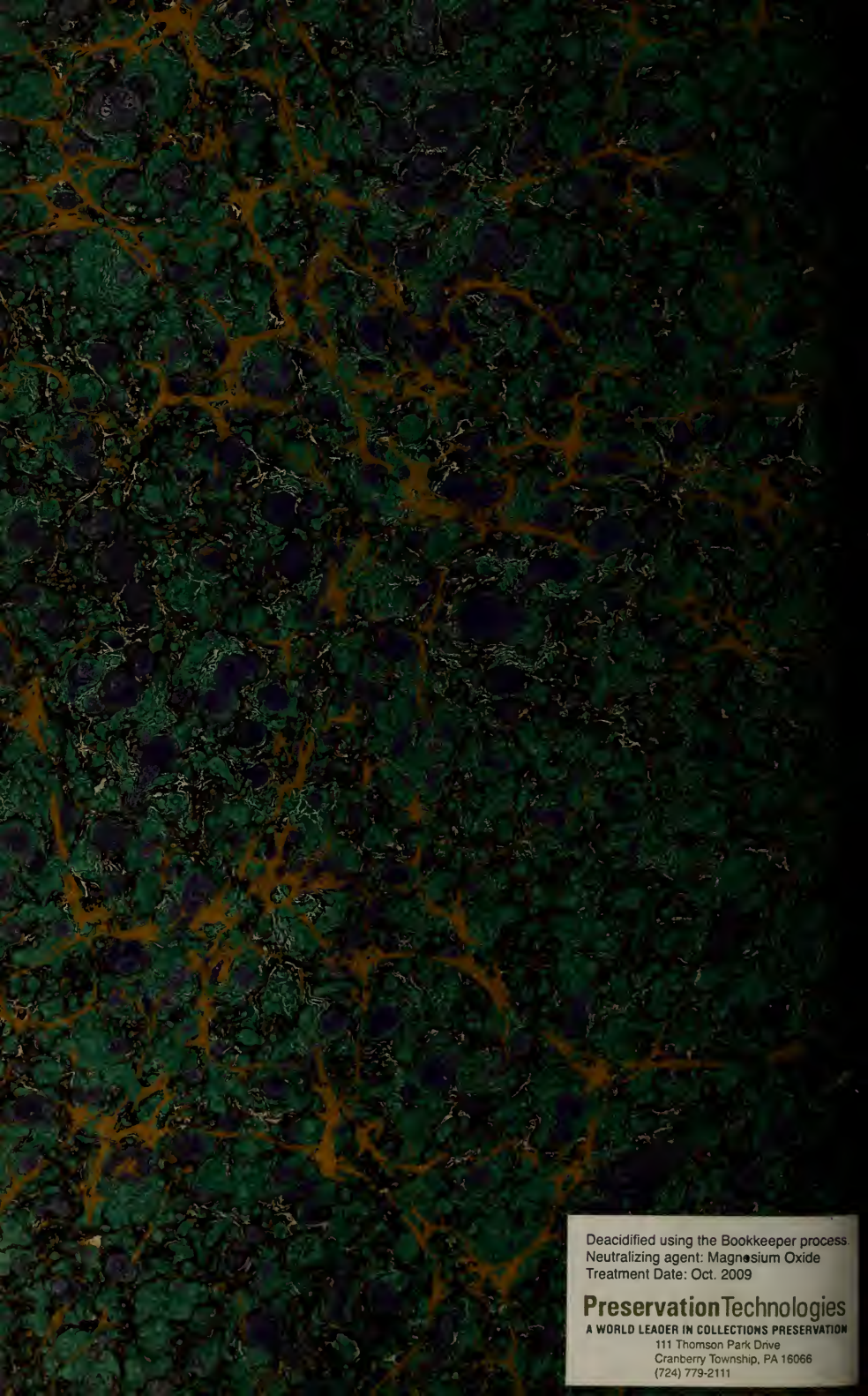


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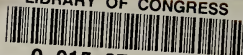
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